The Times History

of

The War in South Africa

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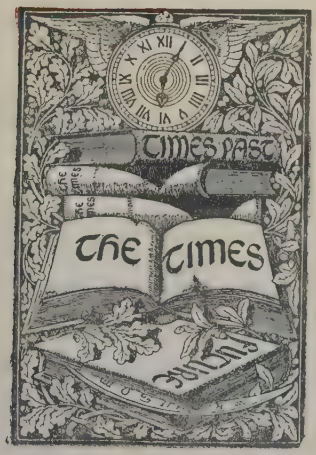
The Times History

of

The War in South Africa

1899–1900



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Vol. I.

LONDON

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON AND COMPANY, LTD.

St. Dunstan's House

1900

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

PREFACE

In the present volume I have endeavoured to set before the reader a full account of the relations between the Imperial Government and the Dutch Republics in South Africa, of the causes that led up to the final crisis, and of the protracted negotiations which preceded the outbreak of the great South African War. No study of the military operations themselves can be complete without at least some slight knowledge of the political situation of which the war was the outcome. The ultimatum, the invasion of Natal, the rebellion in Cape Colony, the part played in the war by the Uitlander corps, the stubbornness of the resistance offered by the Boers, the annexation of their territories, are all matters which can only be understood ir the light of previous events. This, and the fact that no adequate connected account of all the circumstances leading up to the war, has as yet appeared, will, I venture to think, be sufficient justification for prefixing this introductory volume to the series of volumes which are to narrate the course of the military operations.

The subject has been treated, as far as possible, from the historical point of view, though at so short an interval of time from the events themselves it is impossible altogether, on some occasions, to avoid a controversial tone. Absolute impartiality in dealing with so momentous and so recent a conflict of political principles and political ambitions is

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perhaps hardly attainable. The nearest approach to it might be found in a series of histories in which, as in Browning's 'Ring and the Book,' the subject would be treated from the point of view of each in turn of the principal actors in the great drama. The present volume has been written frankly from the point of view of one who is convinced that the essential right and justice of the controversy have been with his own country, and that the policy which has been pursued by the British Government has been, both politically and morally, justifiable. There is, no doubt, a Boer side to the controversy, a point of view based on the memory of old grievances, on peculiar social and political ideals, on a far-reaching national ambition. But it is not a side which it is easy for the ordinary reader to sympathize with, unless he can both appreciate and share the sentiments which have animated the burghers of the Republics in their hostility to the Imperial Government. To that side the present account, in so far as it endeavours to give a true description of the Boer policy and of Boer aspirations, can do no real injustice. There is, however, another view with which the account given in this volume is entirely incompatible. That is the "pseudo-Boer" or "pro-Boer" view—a view begotten mainly of ignorance as to the real character and aims of President Kruger's policy. Given the same set of facts, it is possible to sympathize either with the British Government or with the Transvaal. It is a mere question of political preconceptions and preferences. Those who believe in progress, in honest government, in political liberty and equality, must, upon a true statement of the facts, be on the side of England. Those to whom nationalism is all in all, who hold that the creation of a national state, with racial and linguistic characteristics of its own, is the one supreme object of political development—an object justifying every means taken for its

attainment—will naturally tend to be on the side of the Afrikander Republics. But for the former class to share the sympathies of the latter can only be due to a misconception of the real situation. It is upon this misconception that the "pseudo-Boer" or "pro-Boer" case has been based. It is a view that has been created by the journalists, politicians, and others who, from one motive or another, have from 1881 to the present day tried to plead the Boer cause to the British people by the arguments which they believed to be most acceptable to the latter. It is a fictitious case. Those who have studied the Boers' own views, as expressed in their conversation, their Press, and their political literature, cannot but feel a certain sympathy with the policy of the Republics, even when most convinced of the necessity of opposing that policy. Nor can the bitterest adversary of President Kruger, who has followed with care the career of that wonderful rugged old man, the Hannibal of the Afrikander race, withhold from him a strong sense of admiration and of pity for the measure both of his success and of his failure. But no one who has studied the history of the relations between Great Britain and the Republics, or the lifelong policy of the old President, can have convinced himself that the Transvaal was a peaceful, unaggressive, unambitious, well-managed State, or that President Kruger's only object was to preserve unaltered the independent status guaranteed him by the Convention of London.

Of the present volume, Chapters V. and VI., dealing with the grievances of the Uitlanders and the struggle for political supremacy within the Transvaal before the Jameson Raid, are, in the main, the work of Miss Flora Shaw. The greater part of Chapter VIII., dealing with the relations of the Imperial Government with the Transvaal in the years following the Raid, is from a contributor who has preferred

to remain anonymous. For Chapter IX., which describes the movement in Johannesburg which immediately led to Imperial intervention, I am indebted to Mr. W. F. Monypenny, who was at the time in Johannesburg as editor of the *Star* and correspondent of *The Times*. For the rest of the present volume, which has been written by myself, I have to thank many kind friends for their help and advice. For the earlier part of the history my chief sources of information have been Mr. Theal's writings, and more especially the admirable series of Lectures on the History of the Great Boer Trek, delivered at Pietermaritzburg in 1852–5 by the Hon. Henry Cloete, High Commissioner for Natal in 1843–4, and recently republished, and Mr. John Mackenzie's 'Austral Africa.' For the period of the annexation I have more especially availed myself of Mr. T. F. Carter's 'Narrative of the Boer War,' Mr. Rider Haggard's various writings, the *Staatscourant* published at Heidelberg by the Triumvirate during the war of 1881, and Dr. Jorissen's Memoirs, the last a work of exceptional interest as coming from the pen of one who, as Secretary of the Boer Triumvirate, played a leading part in the insurrection. For the view I have taken of President Kruger's policy, and of the character of the aspirations of the Afrikander nationalist party, I have gone entirely to their own writings, to which, owing to the kindness of the Librarian of the Cape Town Library, I had abundant access. The works I would specially refer to, besides Dr. Jorissen's Memoirs, are Mr. Reitz's 'Afrikander Poems' and the important work of Mr. J. F. van Oordt, entitled 'Paul Kruger, and the Rise of the South African Republic.'* Mr. van Oordt's book does not only contain many valuable details for the period from 1881–1897 gathered from Transvaal official sources, which have not

* Jacques Dusseau & Co., Amsterdam and Cape Town, 1898.

appeared elsewhere, but he gives by far the clearest and most convincing exposition of the Kruger-Leyds policy from the point of view of a fanatical partizan, in whose eyes all moderate Afrikanders, like Mr. Hofmeyr, are nothing but traitors to the cause. The book, which unfortunately has not yet been translated into English, contains ample refutation of what I have called the "pseudo-Boer" case. For the account of the relations between President Kruger and the Free State in the period between 1881 and 1899 I am largely indebted to Mr. J. G. Fraser, of Bloemfontein, by whose kindness I was enabled to study the minutes of the secret conferences held in 1887. For the Uitlander period of Transvaal history and for the Raid and its sequels, I must acknowledge my obligations to Mr. FitzPatrick's 'Transvaal from Within,' a work which is a perfect mine of information. My thanks are also due to Mr. FitzPatrick personally, to Colonel Frank Rhodes, and to Mr. J. W. Wessels for their kindness in reading through my proof-sheets dealing with this period, and for many valuable suggestions. For the final period, for the Bloemfontein Conference, and for the negotiations which followed, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to let the principal actors speak in their own language, making use of the abundant material to hand in the Bluebooks, and of the many letters and telegrams that passed between Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and Pretoria during the summer of 1899, many of which have not hitherto been published, and of which I have been enabled to make use. Special prominence has been given to the views of the Cape Afrikanders as showing how the attitude of the Transvaal impressed those who in many respects were bound to it by the strongest sympathies, but who, being fully in touch with the actual circumstances, could not in private defend the "pseudo-Boer" theses that were at the time so actively put forward

by a certain section of politicians and of the Press in England. For the events of the last three weeks preceding the outbreak of the war, I have relied mainly on my own experience, having had the good fortune to be in Pretoria or with General Joubert's force at Sandspruit from September 24 to October 13.

L. S. AMERY

LONDON, *November* 9.

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A GENERAL MAP OF SOUTH AFRICA,

SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR THIS WORK, IS GIVEN IN A POCKET INSIDE THE FRONT OF COVER OF VOL. I.

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The Times History

OF

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE South African War has been the greatest political event in the history of the British Empire since the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars. Such a description may at first sight appear exaggerated when applied to the suppression by a great Empire of two small Republics in a remote part of the world. But it is justified by the importance of the political principles involved, by the magnitude and extent of the military operations, and by the profound effect the war has created throughout the whole British Empire, and even among foreign nations. It is no less justified by the far-reaching results that the war is destined to have in the future upon the organisation of the British army, the political and economical development of South Africa, the relations between the various self-governing parts of the British Empire, and the position of that Empire among the nations of the world.

Political importance of the war.

The two most important wars fought by Englishmen since Waterloo have been the Russian War and the suppression of the Indian Mutiny. The war in the Crimea was, it is true, fought against a great European Power. But its object was only to maintain a certain balance of power in Eastern Europe, which at that time was looked upon as a security for our position in India; the force sent out was, comparatively speaking, a small one; and even so the effort

Comparison with the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny.

involved was wholly disproportionate to the insignificant results attained. In the Indian Mutiny the issue we fought for was one of unquestionable, even of vital, importance. The struggle for the preservation of our Indian Empire was fierce and long before the flames of mutiny were finally stamped out. Our position in Asia, to some extent our position in the world at large, was made secure by our victory then. In South Africa the principle at issue has been even more important, the stake higher, and the effort greater. The struggle has been not to uphold the rule of Englishmen over Asiatics, but to secure political equality for Englishmen in a country where the English composed more than one half of the whole white population. We have fought, not to maintain the white man's burden but to vindicate the white man's birthright—the right of all white men that come into a new country, and join in the work of developing and making it, to claim their share of its political privileges. Our endeavour has been not to preserve our hold over an alien dependency, but to prevent a vast region inhabited by men of English blood or of that stubborn Low-German stock that is so nearly akin to our own—a region susceptible of indefinite development, and destined some day to play an important part in the world—from being lost to the community of liberty-loving and progressive nations that make up Greater Britain.

The White Man's Birthright.

As regards the military operations themselves, neither the Russian War nor the Sepoy War can bear comparison with the Boer War. An army of over 200,000 men, the largest army of Englishmen ever brought into the field, has been fighting many thousand miles from its base in a vast, almost barren, country, against an enemy aided by every advantage that is given by an intimate knowledge of the natural features of the country, by the friendship of the bulk of the population in the districts which have been the scene of operations, by long preparation, by the possession of the most modern weapons, by the highest confidence in their own prowess, and by the most desperate determination not to be subdued. Small though the Republics were, they represented, in proportion to their citizen population, the

Magnitude of the military operations.

most formidable military power the world has ever known. For several months their forces occupied British territory, invested British towns and inflicted one defeat after another upon British generals, before Lord Roberts turned the tide and began his advance on Pretoria. There was a time when Boer agents in Europe confidently boasted of the terms the Republics intended granting to England as soon as England should recognise the hopelessness of continuing the struggle, and when even the most sanguine felt a passing doubt of our power and our will to bring the war to its only possible conclusion.

Close political analogy with the American Civil War.

There is one great struggle of this century to which the South African War bears a striking resemblance—the American Civil War. The analogy, like any other historical analogy, must not be pressed too far, but there is a most remarkable parallelism in the general character of the political issues, in the course of the negotiations preceding war, and in the actual conduct of the campaigns, a parallelism which sometimes comes out in the most insignificant details. It is true that in some respects the more correct historical parallel to the American Civil War and to the events leading up to it is to be found not so much in the present South African War and the immediate issues from which it sprang, as in the whole history of the relations between the British Government and the Boers. The South African Civil War is separated by more than sixty years from the Great Trek, the South African counterpart of the Secession. But even taking into comparison the situation in South Africa only for the years immediately preceding the war, it is not difficult to trace a most interesting analogy with the situation in America before 1861. In both cases the issue was a double one, or rather presented itself in two different aspects. The question of the black man's right to personal liberty in the Southern States, or of the white man's right to political power in the Transvaal, was in each case inextricably interwoven with the wider question of the maintenance of Federal or Imperial supremacy—the words stand for the same political idea—against the assertion of State rights or Republican independence. The Southern

States were determined to maintain slavery. The American Constitution had never expressly abrogated their position as Sovereign States and they were resolved to press their constitutional right to its utmost consequences—even at the cost of wrecking the Union—sooner than tolerate interference in what they considered their internal affairs. In a similar spirit President Kruger was determined to deny the rights of citizenship to the Uitlanders. He enjoyed almost complete independence by virtue of the London Convention and he was resolved to assert that independence to the full, even to the extent of pursuing a policy openly directed against the supremacy of the British Empire in South Africa. There was a strong desire in the Northern States before the war to see slavery abolished or mitigated, but only the extreme abolitionists contemplated over-riding the sovereignty of the Southern States and insisting on a general liberation of all slaves. Similarly the British public, while it sympathised with the Uitlanders, still felt a certain reluctance to force an absolute equality upon the Transvaal. There was an unwillingness to interfere in its internal affairs further than was absolutely necessary to render the situation tolerable and susceptible of gradual improvement. In fact British public opinion was a little half-hearted about the Uitlander just as opinion in the Northern States was half-hearted about the slave.

Gradual growth of feeling on the questions of slavery and equal rights.

In England, as in America, a strong feeling on the questions of slavery or of the political disability of the Uitlanders only grew up gradually as the result of a vigorous agitation. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and 'The Transvaal from Within' are books which, historically speaking, have performed not dissimilar functions. The bulk of the North did not become uncompromisingly abolitionist till long after the war broke out. So, too, the justice of the Uitlanders' claim to equal treatment has only in the last few months been acknowledged by many who had formerly been inclined to disparage it. On the other hand, whatever the state of feeling in the Northern States with regard to slavery, public opinion was almost unanimous in its resolve that, whether the South had the letter of the American constitution on its

side or not, the Union must be held together. The attitude of the British public towards the situation in South Africa almost exactly paralleled this. The British public looked upon the Republics as, though independent, yet in a certain sense within the Empire, deriving their Constitutional Charter from the Empire and in duty bound to pursue a policy in accord with the general outline of the Imperial policy. Once the British public realised the hostile attitude and the far-reaching ambitions of President Kruger's Government, it was determined that the letter of the Convention granted by Great Britain to the Transvaal should not be used as a weapon against the very existence of British rule in South Africa. In both cases the open rupture only took place after long years of wrangling and bickering, interrupted on occasion by acts of illegal violence.

John Brown's Raid into Virginia.

On October 16, 1859, the whole of America was thrown into a state of frantic excitement by the news that John Brown, a fanatical abolitionist, had made a raid into the state of Virginia with a small body of armed followers, had seized the United States arsenal at Harper's Ferry, cut the telegraph wires, and was calling upon the negroes in Virginia to rise up against their masters. The negroes made no response to his summons, the local people armed themselves, and with the help of the military captured John Brown and the remnants of his band of eighteen men after a desperate resistance. On inquiry it came out that he had for some time past been meditating this raid. He had received money towards his scheme from several eminent and respectable abolitionists whom no one could ever have suspected of being concerned in proceedings of so outrageous a character, but whom he had persuaded against their will by his earnestness and his unbounded confidence in the certain success of his mad enterprise. With part of this money he had hired two houses on the Maryland side of the Potomac, just on the very border of Virginia. While the plot was maturing he had corresponded with his principals by telegrams in cipher in which the plot was usually referred to as a wool business. Thus the securing of some desperate fellows for the enterprise was referred to in the following

language: "Hawkins has found in Canada several good men for shepherds, and if not embarrassed by want of means expects to turn his flock loose about the fifteenth of May"; while one of the subscribers to the plot asks after its progress in these words: "Tell me how our little speculation in wool goes on and what dividend accrues therefrom."

The Jameson Raid.

The outlines of the story cannot but seem familiar to English readers. Substitute Dr. Jameson for John Brown, Mr. Rhodes, the prime minister of Cape Colony, for the eminent and respectable abolitionists, Pitsani camp for the houses on the banks of the Potomac, Doornkop for Harper's Ferry, and "flotation" for the "turning loose of the flock," and we have the story of the Jameson Raid almost down to the most trifling details. The smuggling of rifles into the Transvaal in coal-trucks and oil drums by the De Beers Company, it is true, finds no direct counterpart in John Brown's raid, but four years before that, during the Civil War between the Free State and Slave State parties in Kansas, in which also John Brown had played a notorious part, the "Massachusetts Emigration Society" had sent large numbers of "Sharpe's rifles" to the Free State men in cases labelled "books." The most striking point of difference, perhaps, lies in the fact that John Brown was hanged while Dr. Jameson escaped with a period of imprisonment, a difference not unnatural when Dr. Jameson's guilt is measured against that of a man who had resolved to bring upon his country all the horrors of a slave insurrection. In their relation to the great events which followed, these two raids show a resemblance almost more striking than the close correspondence in the details of their execution. In both cases the aggrieved party magnified their grievance beyond all measure in order to strengthen their case and tie the hands of their opponents. Every endeavour was made in the South to foist the odium of the conspiracy upon men like Seward, Sumner or Chase, just as every endeavour has been made by the Kruger party in South Africa since the Raid to foist the responsibility of it upon Mr. Chamberlain and the British Government. In the North the Democrats expressed their horror and indignation as freely as the

Southerners, while the Republicans deplored the flagrant illegality of the act, but insisted that such things were only made possible by the unsatisfactory state of affairs in the South. On the other hand, the extreme abolitionists, disregarding the illegality of the Raid and looking only at the fundamental causes of dispute, openly made heroes of the raiders. Emerson, a few days after the Raid, described John Brown as a saint awaiting his martyrdom, an exaggerated expression which he himself regretted afterwards. One has only to put English Liberals and Conservatives for Northern Democrats and Republicans and Mr. Alfred Austin for Emerson to see the closeness of the parallel.

Negotiations preceding the outbreak of war.

When in America the prospect of secession became imminent there were many prominent Republicans like Horace Greeley who declared that though the Union must be maintained it would never do to make use of coercion against the Southern States. Theirs was an impossible attitude, but it has its parallel in the attitude of those Englishmen who declared that the Uitlander grievances had to be remedied, but that the Imperial Government ought to make clear its intention of applying pressure to the Transvaal only to the ultimatum point and no further. The last genuine attempt at a peaceful solution, in America as in England, took the shape of a Conference. The Senate Committee of thirteen which met in December, 1860, was the American counterpart of the Bloemfontein Conference. It failed to come to an agreement, though the so-called Crittenden compromise there suggested was, like Sir Alfred Milner's Bloemfontein compromise minimum, argued up and down for months till the actual outbreak of hostilities. In America, as in South Africa, each side was convinced that the other was only "bluffing" and did not really intend to fight. It was the smaller power in each case which took upon itself the responsibility of striking the first blow, and the larger power which showed by its utter unpreparedness how unwilling it had really been to take action. The situation in Cape Colony at the outbreak of war was very like that of the border states in America where men took sides according to their individual sympathies.

The view of many Afrikanders that Cape Colony should stand outside the whole conflict as an independent neutral Power, refusing any assistance to either party—a view somewhat unfairly attributed to Mr. Schreiner owing to certain expressions in a speech made in the Cape Parliament shortly before the war, but openly expressed since then by Dr. Te Water, one of his colleagues in the Cape Ministry—can be matched by the attitude of some of the border states, as, for instance, Kentucky, whose governor, Magoffin, wrote to President Lincoln, declaring that Kentucky would remain neutral and furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing its sister Southern States. In America, as in England, there was a small party which even after the war had broken out, and the issue had been defined down to the one plain question of Federal or Imperial supremacy, still went on arguing and protesting that there was much to be said on both sides and that with a little moderation a peace might be patched up on some basis of compromise and conciliation. Public opinion in the British Empire has listened to the pro-Boer as little as public opinion in the Northern States listened to the "Copperhead."

Comparison of the military operations.

The resemblance between the course of military operations in America and in South Africa is no less close than the resemblance between the political situations. The North, like England, began with a wholly unwarranted contempt of its opponents; and, like England, the North found that it had to put forth exertions never dreamt of before in order to see the war through. The blunders of British generals before abler men came to the front, the initial defeats, the superior mobility of the Boers, their good shooting, their skill in taking cover, all find their parallels in the American war. Even the notorious "unmounted men preferred," sent to the colonies, was anticipated by the refusal of Mr. Cameron, the Secretary of War, to accept the offer of a corps of volunteer cavalry, as too troublesome and expensive, at a time when the Federal army was grievously deficient in mounted men. The defence conducted by the Boers against overwhelming odds has been as desperate and skilful as the defence of the South. In Africa, as in America, the war

was practically a civil war, and, once war was declared, there could be no terms of peace for the smaller combatant short of absolute and unconditional surrender.

Revelation of England's military inefficiency.

One of the first effects of the war was to show up the weakness and inefficiency existing in many departments of our costly military organisation, the paucity of capable senior officers, the serious lack of training of both officers and men for the conditions of active service, the failure of those responsible for the general direction of the army to anticipate the profound change in the whole character of warfare brought about by the improvements in modern fire-arms. But the course of the struggle brought into no less striking relief the unflinching personal bravery and dogged resolution of the British soldier, from highest to lowest, and the vast reserve of power latent in the patriotism of the free nations which compose the British Empire. To the outside world, too, the war has afforded a signal manifestation not only of the unity and of the resources of the British Empire, but of the unquestioned supremacy of British sea power. With an army of 200,000 men locked up at the uttermost ends of the earth, the British Empire has remained as invulnerable and as secure from the possibility of hostile European aggression as if those men had never been moved from their homes.

England's good fortune.

England's proverbial good fortune would seem to have stood her in as good stead in the present war in South Africa as elsewhere. The defects of our military system have been brought to the test, not in a life and death struggle for the defence of our Empire against a great combination of European Powers, where failure might have meant irretrievable national disaster, but in a conflict where the ultimate issue ought never to have been seriously in doubt. At the same time the importance of the issues at stake and the severity of the checks received have been sufficient to impress the need for reform and reorganisation deeply on the public mind. Our good fortune has been no less marked in the actual course of the war. It is impossible to tell what might have been the result if the Boers had, from the very first, left Ladysmith, Mafeking, and

Kimberley alone, and struck right into the heart of the Cape Colony—practically undefended and dangerously disaffected—with an army of 20,000 men. That army would have been trebled or quadrupled in a few weeks. The railway system of Cape Colony, which has proved so invaluable to us, would have fallen into the enemy's hands. General Buller, on landing, would have found himself face to face with the almost impossible task of reconquering the whole of South Africa from the coast. Our very blunders may possibly have been fortunate. In December our generals met with a series of checks, severe enough to create the profoundest anxiety at home and in the colonies, and to arouse the strongest determination to increase the force in South Africa to any figure necessary for the purpose of carrying through the war. But none of those checks was of the nature of a hopeless defeat which would have left a whole region open to invasion. Nor were our enemies, for all their bravery and skill, the men to make prompt and immediate use of their opportunities. After each of their successes, they remained on the defensive as before, wasting the precious weeks while reinforcements kept steadily pouring in. It is not impossible that, if the campaign had begun more successfully, we might have met with far more serious failure at a later stage. Supposing that Sir George White had been able to hold his own in Natal, that Sir Redvers Buller had crossed the Orange River, had invaded the Free State, as he originally intended, and succeeded in reaching Bloemfontein. Judging by the experience Lord Roberts, with a far larger army, comprising over 20,000 mounted men, afterwards had of the skill and mobility of the scattered remnants of the Boer commandos on his eastern flank, is it inconceivable that General Buller, with barely 40,000 men, with hopelessly inadequate cavalry and mounted infantry, with the unbroken forces of the Republics hovering round him on every side, might have been cut off and destroyed, or compelled to make a disastrous retreat to the Orange river or even to the coast? Such a blow would have found England unprepared. While a new army was being got ready and sent across the sea in frantic haste, rebellion

would have spread like wildfire over almost the whole of Cape Colony. The reconquest of South Africa might well, in such a case, have proved a matter of years and involved efforts which would have permanently crippled the resources of the British Empire elsewhere.

The Nation's Recessional.

But the war has not only shaken our military organisation. It has profoundly affected the whole nation in many ways. The Mournful Monday of Nicholson's Nek, the Black Week of Stormberg, Magersfontein and Colenso, the alternate hope and disappointment of six weeks' fighting on the banks of the Tugela, the long anxiety for the fate of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking, have taught lessons that nothing else could have taught so well. The war has brought out many of the nation's best qualities, its patriotism, its fortitude, its steadfastness. The war has been the nation's Recessional after all the pomp and show of the year of Jubilee. It has transmuted the complacent arrogance and contempt of other nations begotten by long years of peace and prosperity to a truer consciousness both of our strength and of our defects, and has awakened an earnest desire to make those defects good. It has set on foot a movement for administrative reform which, one may confidently hope, will not be confined to the War Office alone, but extend to every other department of the national life, and not least to the constitutional framework of the Empire.

Has War no good in it?

War, cruel and wasteful though it be, still has its use, so long as it has the power to stir, as nothing else can, the emotions of a whole nation to its inmost depths; to appeal to the sentiments of unity, of devotion to a common cause, of self-sacrifice; to convert the complacent acknowledgment of the existence of abuses into an earnest desire to sweep those abuses away. An era may come when a decline in the year's export trade, an increase in the national drink bill, or the spread of some preventable disease, will strike at the heart of a whole nation with as profound and startling an effect as the news of a disastrous defeat, when traders and workmen will sacrifice their individual interests for the common good as unhesitatingly as the soldier sacrifices his life on the field of battle. But that day is still far off in

the development of our civilisation, and, till it comes, the need for war survives. War still remains the supreme test of a nation's efficiency and the sternest school of a nation's character. To war England owes not only the possession of her colonies, but the adventurous roving spirit that has made the English a nation of colonisers and traders. In that sense at least trade has always followed the flag. It would be hard to decide how much of England's commercial supremacy in the present century has been due to the presence of abundant mineral deposits and an intelligent free trade policy, and how much has been due to the spirit of self-reliance, of enterprise and vigour that England won from the trials and efforts of twenty years of war, ending in complete success. Has the great national effort of 1870 had nothing to do with the marvellous material development of modern Germany, or did the great struggle for liberty and political unity in America leave no trace upon the American character? There can be no evil greater than a purposeless war, a war that mends no wrong, that settles no conflict of irreconcilable ambitions, that clears no ground for fresh development, that only exhausts without achieving any result. The Crimean War was such. Has the Transvaal War been such also? The future alone can decide; but if, as we believe, what it has done has been to destroy a political system based on racial ascendancy, to sweep away a dishonest and inefficient government, to crush a narrow and unprogressive racial ambition, hostile to the very existence of the British power in South Africa, and for ever menacing South Africa with civil war, and to clear the ground for future progress—if it has done that, the money and the blood spent upon it will not have been spent in vain.

Union of the Empire.

But the war has done more than that. It has brought every part of the British Empire closer together. The sentiment of unity between the mother country and the self-governing colonies had been growing stronger for many years. The importance of the young nations that were springing up in the colonies was already recognised. The appointment, in July 1895, of one of the ablest of English politicians, Mr. Chamberlain, to the Colonial Office, was a

mark of that recognition, and during his tenure of office Mr. Chamberlain has done much to promote mutual understanding between England and the colonies, and a common sentiment of patriotism to an Empire in which the colonies are not possessions, but joint possessors with the mother country of an Imperial inheritance. It required the touchstone of a great war to make the Empire feel its unity. The moment the war became probable the colonies offered their services, and the tidings of initial reverses made them only the more eager to press their help. The loyalty of India and other dependencies was no less strikingly shown, though it was held inadvisable to make use of any but white soldiers in a war fought between white men in a country where the black man presents so difficult a problem. The presence of the colonial volunteers has made the whole character of the war an Imperial one. The Englishman, the Scotchman, the Irishman, the Welshman, the Canadian, the South African, the Australian, the New Zealander, the planter from India or Ceylon, have fought side by side, and exchanged their impressions and political ideas. Every thrill of hope or fear that has been felt in South Africa or in England has been felt no less in Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand. Every drop of colonial blood shed in South Africa has cemented more closely the bond of kinship between the parts of the British Empire.

The justification of the Uitlanders

The colonial volunteers have gained much by their experience of serious fighting, as units in a large regular army. But the regular officers have gained even more from their contact with the colonials. They have learnt that mechanical precision in useless evolutions is not absolutely essential to military efficiency, and that a certain easy familiarity between officers and men is not incompatible with unquestioning obedience to orders. That the volunteer soldiers from the British colonies were brave men was believed at home even before the experience of the war confirmed their bravery. But there was one class of Englishman living abroad of whom this was not believed, of whom it was said that they were cowards, capable only of plotting revolution but without the spirit to revolt;

ready to call upon the Empire to waste its blood and treasure in order that they might gain money more easily, but unready to shed their own blood in their own cause. The war which has been fought for the sake of the much-abused Uitlander has justified him in his countrymen's eyes. In the Imperial Light Horse, in the Protectorate Regiment, in Thorneycroft's Horse, Bethune's Horse, Brabant's Horse, South African Light Horse, Roberts' Horse, Kitchener's Horse, in the Imperial Light Infantry, in the Railway Pioneer Regiment, some five thousand Uitlanders have been fighting for their own good right. Among all the brave regiments, proud of their old traditions of victory, there is no regiment that has won greater glory in this war than the Imperial Light Horse, a force composed exclusively of Uitlanders, men who had sworn to make an end of Paul Kruger's government. The men who, armed with no other weapon but their rifles, charged up to the Boer lines at Elandslaagte, who carried out the successful sortie on Gun Hill from Ladysmith and disputed the crest of Cæsar's camp, were Uitlanders. The men who for seven months grimly held on to their burrows round Mafeking were largely Uitlanders no less than the men who rode to its relief. At Colenso, at Spion Kop, in almost every fight that has been fought, Uitlanders have been there to take their share in the work and in the loss.

Effect of the war on foreign opinion.

Even outside the British Empire the war created a tremendous impression. Every phase of it was followed with as close attention in Europe and the United States as in England itself. In the United States sympathies were much divided. The idea of two small states, more especially two small Republics, maintaining a heroic struggle against a great power, the current misrepresentations as to the motives of the British Government in raising the Uitlander question, and to no small extent the exigencies of party politics in America itself, combined to throw popular sentiment on the side of the Boers. But there was a large minority, comprising all the best elements of American society, which warmly espoused the British cause. In Europe—excepting such countries as Italy, Hungary or Greece, in whose national

struggles England has in the past strikingly shown her sympathy—there was, when the war broke out, practically no such division of sentiment, at least not on the surface. The whole of Europe almost was against us, not so much from any consideration of the merits of the case, as from that dislike and jealousy of England which has developed so enormously in the course of the last decade. The governments of the Great Powers, in general, maintained a consistently correct attitude towards Great Britain, but with the peoples, above all with the Press, it was very different. It has often been said that the European hatred of the British Empire is due to jealousy of our success. That is only part of the truth. The jealousy undoubtedly exists, but it has sprung mainly from a belief that our success is undeserved, based solely on arrogant pretence unsupported either by real military strength, moral courage, or patriotism. Englishmen, full of the conviction that the British Empire is the greatest power on earth and that every acquisition of territory or influence by another state is a British concession, are apt to consider British foreign policy stupid, good-natured, and irresolute. But foreigners, persuaded of the inherent weakness of the British Empire and of its lack of cohesion, have attributed its success mainly to insatiable greed, sleepless cunning, and audacious bluff, and have hated it accordingly. The tidings of British reverses were received everywhere with a fierce clamour of exultation. The imminent dissolution of the British Empire, the pricking of the great bubble which had so long imposed upon the world by its appearance of solidity and strength, was everywhere proclaimed. The Boers reckoned for little in all this outburst of feeling. It was on the English that all the attention of Europe was concentrated. Would they succeed in the task they had undertaken, or would they, as men hoped and believed, fail through military incapacity and lack of the patriotism required to make the necessary sacrifices? The successful course of the war, the steadfastness of the British nation, the patriotism which impelled thousands of volunteers from Great Britain and from every part of the British Empire to throng forward and

offer their services, have profoundly modified the opinion held of us in Europe. The manifestation of the reality of British power and British patriotism has done much to clear away the misunderstanding which has underlain the general dislike of England, and may perhaps have achieved more in the cause of European peace than many peace conferences.

Justice of the war.

But if public opinion in Europe was swayed more by ill-will towards England than by any reasoned conviction of the justice of the Boer cause, there was in England itself a not inconsiderable number of men who held that the war was an unrighteous war, unjustly forced upon the Republics by the British Government at the instigation of an ambitious High Commissioner, supported by a gang of unscrupulous capitalists and by a hireling press. The accusation has been freely brought against Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner of having wantonly provoked an unnecessary war. But it is not easy to see what other policy they could have pursued consistently with their duty to the interests of the British Empire. War might certainly have been averted by a refusal to take up the cause of the Uitlanders or by accepting concessions which could give them no real relief. For that matter it might have been averted by prompt compliance with Mr. Reitz's ultimatum. But such a policy of acquiescence would inevitably have led to worse mischief in the future. The war itself has shown how serious was the menace to the very existence of British rule in South Africa. It was a fortunate thing that at so critical a time the post of High Commissioner should have been occupied by a man possessing both ability and courage, a man who was not content to fold his hands and leave his successors to cope with the deluge, but who was determined, while there was yet time, to set things straight in South Africa—by war if need be, but peacefully if peace were possible. For once Great Britain has sent out an able man to South Africa and not recalled him the moment he has attempted to evoke order out of chaos.

Not a Capitalist War.

The assertion that the war has been a capitalists' war, that the Uitlander grievances were invented by the capitalists in order to upset the Boer Government and convert the

Transvaal into a gigantic syndicate, has been made with great persistency. But it is not borne out by facts. The Uitlander reform movement was at first discouraged by the capitalists, and almost to the very last the capitalists were far more eager to bargain with the Transvaal Government for reasonable financial and administrative reforms than to clamour for the franchise. It was only when they finally realised that persuasion without the power to influence the Government through the elections was useless that they threw in their lot with those who demanded the franchise. They not unnaturally desired reform, but they had no craving for war.

Transvaal pretensions.

It is difficult to conceive what injustice there was in the demand of the Imperial Government that there should be immediate and substantial redress of the grievances of the Uitlanders. The Uitlanders were subjected to an oppressive, corrupt, and unsympathetic administration. They were practically denied any chance of participating in the citizenship of a state which they had to all intents and purposes created—for the Transvaal of the last ten years, with its large revenue, with its lavish expenditure on salaries, on public buildings, on railways, and, not least, on armaments, was entirely a product of Uitlander activity. Sympathisers with the Transvaal have often put the question, What would England have done if invaded by a foreign immigration equalling the whole population of the country? But there is really no analogy between the cases of an old-established, densely populated community, with a highly complex political system and a difficult labour problem, and of a newly discovered, thinly peopled, and undeveloped country. There was no question in the Transvaal of the Uitlander crowding the Boer out of his employment. It is absurd to suppose that some 20,000 families of herdsmen, squatted for half a century over the face of a country as large as France, really had an indefeasible right against all subsequent immigrants to the perpetual undivided control of all the powers of government. It is equally absurd to argue, because these men had trekked and grazed over the surface of the country, that therefore all the potential wealth contained in the

ground, of which they knew nothing, and with which they could have done nothing, was theirs by right, and that they were justified in taking toll of those who by the application of energy and trained intelligence had brought that wealth to light, without giving any return in the form of a share in the political life of the State. Yet the Transvaal claimed both these rights to their utmost extent. From this point of view alone the disabilities of the Uitlanders justified intervention. But there was a still stronger justification. No one can understand the problem the Imperial Government had to face who does not realise that the true grievance of the Uitlanders was not merely that they were misgoverned and excluded from power, but that they were misgoverned and excluded because they were Englishmen. The keynote of President Kruger's policy was enmity to England and the English. He kept the English in the Transvaal down partly because he hated them for what they were, but still more because he feared that their admission to citizenship would interfere with his policy, a policy of which the first object was to shake off the fetters of the London Convention, and the ultimate object to expel the British power, and as far as possible the British race, from South Africa. The comparatively small non-British element in the Uitlander population was, it is true, officially subjected to the same disabilities as the British, but only because to have done otherwise would have provoked a peremptory ultimatum for breach of the Convention. It was favoured whenever an opportunity presented itself. It was this hostility to all that was English, this singling out of the English as an inferior race, allowed on sufferance to earn money and pay taxes, but unfit for the rights of citizenship, that made the Transvaal a "festering sore" in the heart of South Africa. The ambition of the Transvaal was a menace to the British Empire, and its internal policy a perennial source of racial discord in the neighbouring State and colonies, and a permanent danger to the peace of South Africa. Every consideration of justice and expediency demanded the intervention of the Imperial Government to put an end to a situation which was felt to be intolerable.

President Kruger's hatred of England.

It is perfectly true that there was also a Transvaal side to the dispute. In most struggles between rival political systems or rival ambitions there is much that can be said on both sides. The British Government had in the past sinned grievously in its treatment of the Boers. Where it should have been reasonable and considerate it had been self-righteous and harsh; where it should have been severe it had been weak. It had broken its promises and failed to carry out its threats. It had given the Boers good reason both to hate and to despise it. Nor was the dislike felt by the Boers towards the new alien population, in every respect so different from them, altogether unnatural. The Jameson Raid, the long wranglings between the Transvaal and the Imperial Government had not tended to diminish the bitterness of the Boer feeling. But could it, therefore, be seriously contended that the hands of the British Government were for ever tied, that it must for ever abandon the defence of British subjects and run the risk of losing its hold over South Africa, because it had committed mistakes in the past? In most other national disputes the existence of another side to the case has had very little influence on public opinion in England. During the Fashoda crisis no Englishman ever contended that France had good reason to hate England, on the ground that she had been robbed by England of her possessions in Canada and India, unjustly tricked out of Egypt, and maligned over the Dreyfus affair, and that it was, therefore, unrighteous to thwart her not unnatural ambition of extending her territory across Africa from west to east and thus inflicting a check on British expansion. Yet this is exactly the sort of reasoning that thousands of Englishmen have applied to the Transvaal question. So far from the English press having conspired to vilify the Transvaal and inflame popular passion against it, there never has been an instance where the case of the other side has been so earnestly and fully argued in the English press and in Imperial Parliament. Practically the whole of one of the two great political parties was till very recently pledged to the advocacy of President Kruger's policy against England. The fact is that the Transvaal question has, unfortunately

The Transvaal side of the dispute.

English partisans of the Transvaal.

for South Africa, always been treated in England as a party question. But that it should have been so treated really depended on the fact that, consciously or unconsciously, Englishmen regarded it as an internal question. Liberals protested against intervention in the Transvaal because they looked upon it as an interference with a system of self-government they had themselves established within the bounds of the Empire. It required the lesson of war to teach them that the Transvaal was not a peaceful border community enjoying specially wide rights of self-government, but a powerful and ambitious enemy.

Views of the peace-at-any-price party.

There was a strong peace-at-any-price party, too, in England and among loyal Afrikanders in Cape Colony, which feared that the Boers would fight sooner than make any concession, and which accordingly persuaded itself that the Boers were in the right in order to be able to denounce intervention and avert the possibility of war. During the negotiations this party was ready to acclaim any modicum of concession on the part of President Kruger, as a fair and sufficient settlement, irrespective of any feelings of the Uitlanders in the matter. When hostilities actually broke out it declared that the Transvaal had practically conceded all that was demanded and that the British Government had purposely forced on a war over trifling points affecting the details of the franchise scheme or the phraseology of a despatch. As a matter of fact, President Kruger never showed any intention of honestly granting what was demanded of him, namely, a recognition of the right of the Uitlanders to a reasonable share in the control of the Transvaal. But even if it had been otherwise, if the war had been declared over a trifle, on whom should the blame have fallen? On a great Empire for making a demand the common justice and moderation of which can hardly be questioned—a demand which was in itself a compromise—and insisting, not peremptorily but through months of negotiation, that this demand should be the irreducible minimum of what it could accept, or on a petty semi-dependent Republic for refusing to concede this demand just because to do so would be a concession, and

might seem to acknowledge a right to an interference which it resented?

The fundamental justification of the British policy.

But apart from purely British interests there was a higher ground on which intervention was justified. It was justified by consideration of the interests of the inhabitants of South Africa, Dutch and English alike. This is clear from a comparison of the ultimate objects each party had in view. All that the Imperial Government desired was to put an end to a state of affairs which was a permanent source of racial strife and political unrest, in order to pave the way for the growth of a common South African patriotism within the limits of which both Dutch and English national feeling, British Colonial self-Government and Republican independence, should each have free play. The Republics themselves made the retention of their independence an impossibility. Otherwise the war has in no way affected the disposition of the Imperial Government towards the Dutch race in South Africa. President Kruger, on the other hand, was determined to maintain by force of arms the absolute supremacy in the Transvaal of the most retrogressive and prejudiced section of the Dutch population, with the ambition ultimately to subject the whole of South Africa to the same domination. At its best his was a policy of selfish nationalism unalloyed with any admixture of political principle. This attempt to create a politically supreme Dutch nationality in South Africa, perpetuating the principles of Transvaal administration, was a thing the Imperial Government was thoroughly justified in opposing as being both evil in itself and contrary to the interests of South Africa.

Nationalism and liberty not necessarily identical.

The connexion between nationalism and resistance to autocratic misgovernment in Europe during the first half of the century, the struggles of Greece, Poland, Hungary or Italy, to be free, created a notion, still very prevalent among English liberals, that nationalism is in itself a desirable thing and that, apart from all question of political principle, it is in some unexplained way identical with political liberty. Much sympathy has been wasted on little peoples "rightly struggling to be free," whose chief struggle has been to

wreck satisfactory political institutions and create unprovoked discords for the sake of politically isolating some stray fragment from the world's ethnological scrap heap, or of propagating some obscure and wholly superfluous dialect. Little sympathy is bestowed on the great peoples rightly struggling for mastery, for the supremacy of higher civilisation and higher political principle. Where nationalism has had its base in a glorious past history, in a noble literature and in a great political ideal, it has been a power for good. Italy and Germany are the better for being united and freed from Austrian domination or French interference. But no impartial person can seriously argue that the efforts of the Czechs to resuscitate the half-forgotten language of John Huss and force it upon the German-speaking inhabitants of Bohemia have been for the good of that country. And can it be said that the exclusion of English-speaking immigrants from political privilege, and the endeavour artificially to foster the Dutch language with the object of creating an exclusively Dutch Afrikander nationality, are for the benefit of South Africa?

There could have been no real compromise on the main issue.

Whatever the merits of the two rival ideals, they were incompatible. Sir Alfred Milner's suggestion of a fair franchise was a compromise only in the sense that it was intended to extinguish the hostile nationalist ideal by gradual and peaceful means, without interfering with the internal independence of the Republic. To have acquiesced in that solution would in President Kruger's eyes have been to give up the independence of the Transvaal, as he understood independence, and to betray the future hope of Afrikanderdom. For a time he tried to bargain and evade, in the hope of saving the substance while conceding the form; to palm off some franchise scheme that was not the one demanded, and that might be neutralised and rendered ineffective as soon as the pressure of the British Government relaxed. In the end, when he saw no hope of shirking the issue any longer, he faced it boldly, resolved, sooner than submit, to stake all on the fortune of war. The test of force to which he appealed has decided against him and his ideal —for the welfare of South Africa. In course of time, as

the main features of the struggle begin to stand out from the petty details of the negotiations, and as the bitterness of racial feeling subsides, it is probable that the verdict of British and of South African opinion on the justice of the war and the necessity of the suppression of the Dutch Republics will be as unanimous as that of American opinion on the justice and necessity of the suppression of the Southern Confederacy.

CHAPTER II

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE BOERS

1815. Formal acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope by Great Britain.

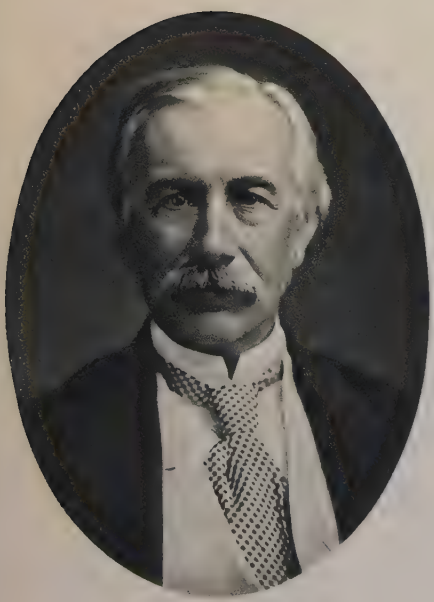
In the general settlement of European affairs at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Great Britain, in consideration of a sum of £6,000,000 paid to the restored and enlarged kingdom of the Netherlands, was formally confirmed in its possession of the Dutch naval station and colony of the Cape of Good Hope, which, after a previous short military occupation from 1795 to 1803, it had been administering since the year 1806.

The present British realm in South Africa has been the outcome of that transaction. But it was no consideration of future development that influenced English statesmen in acquiring the Cape. Their object was simply and solely to secure for England the most important naval station on the way to India. The rest of the colony was included in the bargain, because by itself it was valueless to Holland, and because it was felt that somebody had to be responsible for its administration. In dealing with British policy in South Africa it must never be forgotten that for the greater part of the past century the Home Government regarded the colony and the colonists as an irksome and unprofitable responsibility thrust upon its shoulders by the necessity of retaining Cape Town and Simon's Bay. It was only very gradually and with many grievous relapses, for which South Africa has since paid dearly, that English statesmen came to recognise the greatness of the inheritance that had devolved upon them, and the obligation by which they were bound to consult the interests and the aspirations of the colonists. The men who came out to govern the colony were the first to realise England's duty and England's opportunity. But again and

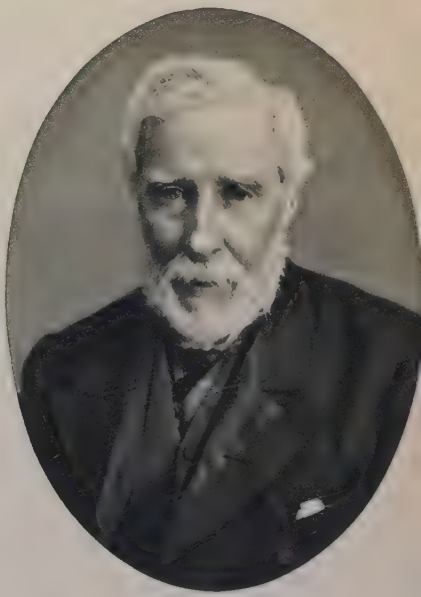
The Cape originally regarded only as a naval station.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR BENJAMIN D'URBAN, G.C.B., K.C.H.,
GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, 1834–1837.
From a Print in the Possession of Mr. W. D'Urban.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR HARRY G. W. SMITH, G.C.B.,
GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, 1847–185
From Photo of Steel Engraving.



SIR H. BARTLE FRERE, G.C.B., G.C.S.I.,
HIGH COMMISSIONER, 1877–1880.
From Photo by Elliott & Fry.



THE RIGHT HON. SIR GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., P.C.,
GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, 1854–185
From Photo by Elliott & Fry.

again their efforts were thwarted by ignorant, unsympathetic and prejudiced colonial secretaries at home. Africa became the grave of reputations as one able man after another who grasped its problems and endeavoured to solve them was ruined by the want of support or even the active hostility of those that neither understood nor cared to solve. D'Urban, Grey, Frere—all had to suffer for knowing England's duty better than those who directed England's fortunes at home.

The Dutch colonists.

Already, in 1815, Cape Colony, though small as compared with what it has since become, embraced an extent of territory as large as England, sparsely populated by European colonists. These colonists were in the main of Dutch descent. There had indeed been a considerable immigration of French Huguenots and of Germans, but the drastic measures the Dutch had taken to suppress any indications of national individuality had had their effect, and the French and German settlers were already completely merged in the mass of Dutch colonists before the British occupation. But the Dutch colonists had in Africa become a very different people from the Dutch of the mother country. In their manner of life, their habits, their language, even in their character, they had undergone a profound change. This change was not so marked in the inhabitants of Cape Town and the farmers of the fertile coast strip as in those pioneers who had crossed on to the barren table-land which everywhere forms the interior of the south-western corner of Africa.

The "Trek Boer."

These men had developed in their new surroundings a mode of living very different from that which they had left behind in Holland or even at the Cape. Though they retained the custom of living on separate farms and called themselves boers, *i.e.*, farmers, they had become a people of semi-nomadic herdsmen, for ever "trekking" from one pasture ground to some more inviting one beyond, and as much at home in their capacious waggons as in the miserable huts they dignified by the title of farm-houses. As Aylward wrote of them in 1878, the "trek" had "eaten itself into their hearts." Their solitary life developed an intense personal independence often amounting to an impatience of all legal restraints. Their intercourse with the natives, whether as serfs or as enemies,

accentuated the suspiciousness and cunning natural to peasants all over the world. In the hardships of the struggle for existence the civilisation they had brought with them rapidly perished. Only the deep religious feeling that had led their ancestors in an age of persecution to take refuge in this remote corner of the world, survived in all its intensity and narrowness. With all their defects the colonists were a fine race, possessing many of the best qualities of their ancestry. The state of barbarism into which a great portion of them had relapsed was due to temporary and removable causes. The historian Theal's remark that "no people not of British descent ever presented such favourable material for the formation of a dependency loyal to Great Britain," is fully justified. That, in the event, a large portion of the Dutch population of South Africa became hostile to the British Government and to the whole of that civilisation which they identified with it, was due more to the mistakes of their rulers than to any natural intractability or inherent barbarism on their part.

Discontent under British rule.

The Government of the Dutch East India Company had been tyrannous and oppressive to the colonists, who had on several occasions risen in rebellion. The British administration was undoubtedly a great improvement, even though the principles of colonial government were still very far from being understood by Great Britain in 1815. Nevertheless from the very first there were manifestations of discontent with British rule. The consent of the colonists had never been asked to their transfer under a foreign government. The doctrines of the French Revolution had been preached at the Cape in the days of the short-lived Batavian Republic, and had already awakened in some minds the aspiration for an independent Republic of South Africa. But there would have been no serious or permanent discontent if it had not been for the native question. On that question the views of the colonists were absolutely at variance with those of the British Government and the British people. The attitude of the colonists towards the natives was the attitude of the seventeenth century, of the days of the slave trade, the attitude of the Puritans in America. The natives they

Republicanism as early as the British occupation.

regarded as inferior creatures destined by providence for the part of servants. In the more civilised parts of the colony the natives, slaves or servants, were not as a rule ill-treated, but there is no doubt that in the remoter districts the rough "trek Boers" often treated them with atrocious brutality. Excuses for dispossessing Hottentots or Kaffirs of their land or cattle were always easily found. As for the mischievous and thieving Bushmen the Boers regarded them simply as vermin and exterminated them accordingly. In England, on the other hand, the popular mind was full of that exaggerated sentimentalism about the noble savage which originated with Rousseau. The anti-slavery movement and the missionary revival were at their height. The London Missionary Society was a power before which the strongest ministry quaked. No wonder then that travellers and missionaries visiting South Africa, with such entirely different notions from those of the colonists, gave very unfavourable accounts of the latter. The missionaries especially who came out to live among the natives unreservedly espoused the cause of the natives against the colonists. Many of them were earnest good men, but hopelessly fanatical and prejudiced. To show their practical belief in the equality of races they even went to the length of taking Hottentot wives, thus losing all the respect that the colonists might have had for them in their religious capacity. They judged the colonists by their own moral standard, and found them ignorant, coarse, cruel, and absolutely indifferent as to whether their "zwart schepsels," or black creatures, had immortal souls or not. The natives they judged by no standard beyond that of their potentiality to receive baptism. They thus failed entirely to realise the great difference that still separates the roughest and most ignorant members of a civilised race from mere savages. The missionaries, like the Afrikander Party of a later day, considered that Africa was meant for the Africans, and they resented the presence of the colonists as an intrusion in very much the same spirit that President Kruger resented the presence of the Uitlanders. The colonists hated the missionaries for stirring the natives up against their masters

The native question.

The home Government and the missionaries.

and for encouraging them to desert their work and settle down in mission villages. It is said that many farms in the north and east of the colony had to be abandoned entirely because the Hottentot servants had run away to the mission stations. But most of all they hated the missionaries for maligning them to the public and the Government at home. It would have been no excessively difficult matter for the British Government to have put a check on the ill-treatment of the natives, by the use of a little judicious firmness and by securing the assistance of the better class among the colonists and of the Dutch clergy. All that was necessary was to show some slight concession to colonial feeling and to common sense. Unfortunately the Home Government from the very first threw in its lot too unreservedly with the missionaries. In theory it only insisted on absolute equality between the white man and the black, on the equal value of the testimony of the native and the testimony of the white man, and on the right of the free native to the possession of the territory he occupied. In practice it went much further and assumed, in so far as its intentions were not thwarted by the better sense of its own officials on the spot, an attitude of avowed hostility to the colonists. The farmer could get no redress for the theft of his cattle or for the loss caused by breach of contract on the part of his servants. But the whole machinery of the law was set in motion against him at once on any baseless charge brought forward by some malicious Hottentot. Any Bushman who roamed over a tract of country in quest of roots and maggots was, in the eyes of the authorities at home, the rightful and ancient owner of it; a colonist who established his homestead in the district was an intruder and a criminal.

1811. The Black Circuit.

In 1811 the first judicial circuit was sent round the colony by Lord Caledon. The occasion was made use of by two missionaries, Vanderkemp and Read, to indict the whole body of the colonists for their treatment of the natives. Every story of native ill-treatment during the past generation had been raked together by them, and they now brought nearly one hundred charges of murder or brutal assault against the members of almost every respectable family on

the eastern border, supporting these charges by the testimony of over one thousand native witnesses. Not one of the more serious charges was substantiated. This circuit, commonly known as the Black Circuit, created the most intense indignation in the colony. Such methods were not likely to make the Dutch more kindly disposed towards their natives. They only animated the colonists with a fierce hatred of the missionaries and a bitter resentment against a Government which submitted them to such persecution at the hands of reckless and unscrupulous fanatics. The farmers avowed openly that they would obey no summons issued on a charge brought by a native.

1815. The Slagter's Nek rebellion.

In 1815 a number of farmers in the Somerset and Tarkastad districts rose in rebellion under one Hans Bezuidenhout. Bezuidenhout's brother, a notoriously turbulent character, had been shot in resisting his apprehension by a detachment of soldiers, on a charge of having maltreated a Hottentot servant. The rebel leaders announced their intention of sweeping the English into the sea. In order to make sure of success, and to intimidate those of the colonists who were unwilling to join, they committed what in the eyes of colonists has always been the unpardonable crime and offered the Kaffir chief Gaika a large tract of colonial territory if he would help them against the English. Gaika hesitated. The majority of the burghers, instead of joining in the rebellion, took up arms loyally to assist in its suppression. The rebels were dispersed, the leaders captured and tried at Uitenhage before a Dutch judge and Dutch jury. Five of them were condemned to death, and the sentence was carried out at Slagter's Nek, the very spot where they had met together and sworn to make an end of English tyranny. The gallows on which they were hanged gave way, but, in spite of the entreaties of the bystanders, the officer presiding at the execution insisted on its being repaired and the sentence carried out. Such severity was perhaps unfortunate. The burghers who had helped to suppress the rebellion soon came to regard the rebels as martyrs to the cause of liberty. The wanton character of the rebellion was forgotten, all that was remem-

bered was that, under British rule, a number of leading farmers had met their death by the bullet or the hangman's rope for the sake of a lying Hottentot. The memory of Slagter's Nek has been kept alive among the Boers to the present day.

1838. The liberation of the slaves.

On December 1, 1834, slavery was declared abolished for ever in Cape Colony, and the slaves, after four years' apprenticeship, were to be liberated on December 1, 1838. The compensation given was miserably inadequate. In very few cases did the farmers get a third of the value of their slaves. Many positively refused to accept the compensation offered, as a protest against the injustice of the measure. It was not, however, to be the last time in South African history that England displayed her much vaunted magnanimity at other people's expense. To crown all, the day for the general emancipation was carefully fixed for the middle of the wheat harvest, which it seriously affected.

The Kaffir Question.

But by far the most serious grievance of the colonists was the state of the eastern frontier and the attitude of the Home Government towards the Kaffir question. The Kaffirs, who had for the last generation been steadily encroaching on the eastern border of the colony, were, unlike the Hottentots, dangerous and enterprising enemies. The border was kept in a constant state of unrest. The Kaffirs raided the colony to steal the colonists' cattle, and the farmers in their turn raided the Kaffir territories. The burghers were continually being called out on commando to repel invasions,

1820. Settlement of English colonists on the Kaffir frontier.

often for months at a time. In 1820 a large body of English settlers, nearly five thousand strong, the ancestors of the present English farmers of the Eastern Province, was imported to strengthen the defence. But the vacillating policy of the Government, and its resolve to stand purely on the defensive and take no punitive measures, made the task of protecting the border almost impossible. The Kaffirs crowded on the edge of the colony, where they could gain a comparatively easy livelihood by the lifting of cattle without that danger of requital which there would have been had they raided the Kaffir tribes. The authorities at home usually tried to lay the blame of any disturbance on the farmers,

partly from their eagerness to avoid the trouble and expense of punitive expeditions, and partly because the missionaries had convinced them that the Kaffirs were an idyllic peaceful folk, only goaded into resistance by the constant aggressions and the horrible cruelty of the colonists. To the complaint of the colonists, Dutch or English, who were rapidly being impoverished and ruined, they paid no heed. On Christmas Day, 1834, without any immediate provocation, an enormous army of Amaxosa Kaffirs suddenly invaded Cape Colony. The whole Eastern district from the Keis-Kama to Uitenhage was devastated. Some eight hundred farms were burnt down or pillaged, and several hundred thousand head of cattle carried off. The whole population was called out to assist the military under Colonel (afterwards Sir Harry) Smith, and after nine months' hard fighting the Kaffirs were subdued. The Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, one of the ablest and most universally beloved men ever sent out to Africa from England, made a treaty with the Kaffir chiefs providing against a repetition of such an invasion, and extending the colonial frontier from the Keis-Kama to a more defensible line on the Great Kei River. The new strip of territory was to be peopled partly by the Fingoes, an enslaved Kaffir tribe on whose liberation D'Urban had insisted, and partly by the colonists. The settlement was in every respect satisfactory. Colonists of every shade of opinion, including even missionaries, expressed their enthusiastic approval of the wisdom of his policy. Unfortunately for South Africa, this critical moment in its history coincided, not for the last time, with a change of Government at home. When Sir B. D'Urban's despatch to Lord Aberdeen relating the termination of the war and the conclusion of a satisfactory settlement reached England, it fell into the hands of Lord Glenelg. The new Colonial Secretary was not only ignorant and incompetent, but completely under the influence of the friends of a missionary called Philip, a mischievous and unscrupulous person, who had been living among the Kaffirs, continually stirring them up against the colonists, and had persuaded them that he would secure for them the country between the Keis-Kama and Fish Rivers

1834–5. The third Kaffir War.

Sir B. D'Urban and Lord Glenelg.

which they had ceded to Great Britain in 1819. D'Urban's despatch received a reply inspired in every line by crass ignorance, pharisaical self-righteousness and bitter prejudice. The Kaffirs were declared to be fully justified in invading the colony without provocation, and Colonel Smith was accused of the most villainous atrocities—all on the strength of reports which the Colonial Secretary himself acknowledged could not be substantiated. The colonists were to receive no compensation for their losses, the ceded territory was to be restored to the Kaffirs, and the intention was even announced of withdrawing the colonial boundary to the Fish River. The following short extracts give some notion of the views which then inspired British colonial policy—

"The Caffres had to resent and endeavoured impotently to avenge a series of encroachments upon them. . . .

"The Caffres may indeed have been, nor can I doubt that they were, accustomed to harass the inhabitants with their depredations. But driven as they had been from their ancient and lawful possessions, confined within a comparatively narrow space, where pasturage for their cattle could not readily be found, and urged to revenge and desperation by the systematic injustice of which they have been the victims, I am compelled to embrace, however reluctantly, the conclusion that they had a perfect right to hazard the experiment, however hopeless, of extorting by force that redress which they could not expect otherwise to obtain. . . .

"The claim of sovereignty over the new province, bounded by the Keishkamma and the Kye, must be renounced. It rests upon a conquest resulting from a war, in which, as far as I am at present able to judge, the original justice is on the side of the conquered, not of the victorious party. Even if there were the most powerful motives of apparent expediency, which I cannot allow, yet His Majesty would never consent to consult expediency at the expense of justice."

Lord Glenelg's sanctimonious unfairness.

This distorted version of the causes of the Kaffir invasion and of the relations between colonists and Kaffirs was accompanied by an equally unfair attempt to minimise the losses of the colonists and exaggerate those of the Kaffirs. Among the documents Sir B. D'Urban had forwarded explaining his policy was a letter from a Wesleyan missionary

urging the adoption of certain restrictive measures to prevent the recurrence of cattle raiding. That a missionary could actually suggest that a native should be punished severely for a crime committed against mere white colonists seemed to Lord Glenelg a monstrous thing. The suggestions themselves were too dreadful even to discuss—"I spare myself the pain and humiliation of any more particular comment on the document in question." To so cruel, unjust and insulting a communication the Governor could only reply by a full account of the origin and cause of the war, by pointing to the success his measures had already had in the few months that had elapsed since the conclusion of hostilities, and by enclosing petitions and resolutions from every part of the colony signed by English and Dutch alike, setting forth the sufferings which the colonists had undergone, asking for compensation and proclaiming their unqualified confidence in Sir B. D'Urban's policy. D'Urban's reply was not untinged with a shade of bitterness—

"Whatever the completion of the experiment of invasion might have been, incomplete as your Lordship seems to consider it, it must, I think, be admitted from all these documents, to have been as extensive, as desolating and as bloody a one as the advocates of the Caffre cause could well have desired; and it is to be hoped that its awful results may be admitted by these advocates as some trifling expiation of the imputed sins of the unfortunate colonists. . . . It is difficult for me to believe that such can be your Lordship's sentiments with regard to a savage and treacherous enemy on the one part, and His Majesty's faithful, industrious, and unoffending subjects on the other; and I can only give credit to it, because it is before me in your Lordship's despatch and confirmed by your signature."

The following conclusion of a petition for compensation from the English settlers of Albany sets forth briefly the reasonable wishes of the whole body of colonists—

"Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to cause inquiry to be made into their conduct and circumstances, in order that the apprehension and obloquy under which they have so long and so unjustly laboured, by the mis-statements of dishonest or mistaken persons, may be removed; that reasonable protection to life and

property may be afforded, that just and well-defined relations may be entered into with the native tribes adjacent, and that the sufferers by the late irruption of the Caffres may receive compensation for their severe and ruinous losses."

Sir B. D'Urban's policy reversed. He himself dismissed 1838.

But Lord Glenelg only hardened his heart. Sir B. D'Urban's policy was reversed, and he himself, as he continued to protest against the unwisdom of the Colonial Office, finally dismissed in 1838. This was the last decisive blow to the long-suffering colonists. For twenty years they had submitted to systematic misrepresentation. Their racial pride had been wounded by the obvious partiality of their rulers for negroes and Hottentots. They had been brought to the verge of ruin by the abolition of all vagrancy laws and by the liberation of their slaves. In addition to all that they now found that the British Government openly espoused the cause of a savage tribe which had wantonly invaded and devastated their country. Such a government seemed to them worse than no government. Sooner than endure any longer a rule which oppressed without protecting, they would go out into the wilderness and found a new home for themselves in the almost uninhabited lands beyond the Orange River. The declaration published by Piet Retief, one of the leaders of the emigrant farmers, gives a striking picture of their attitude towards the British Government. After complaining of all the grievances suffered by the farmers, of the "unjustifiable odium cast upon us by interested and dishonest persons under the name of religion," and announcing their intention to uphold the just principles of liberty, to exclude slavery, and to refrain from molesting or attacking any native tribe—intentions which, however, were not always consistently put into practice—the declaration concludes: "We quit this colony under the full assurance that the English Government has nothing more to require of us, and will allow us to govern ourselves without its interference in future. We are now leaving the fruitful land of our birth, in which we have suffered enormous losses and continual vexation, and are about to enter a strange and dangerous territory; but we go with a firm reliance on an all-seeing, just, and merciful God, whom we

1836–1837. The Great Trek. Retief's declaration.

shall always fear and humbly endeavour to obey." For the next few months preparations for emigration were busily made all over the Eastern Province. Everywhere farms were sold and waggons got ready for the long journey into the unknown. By the end of the year the Great Trek had begun, and by the middle of 1837 there were over a thousand waggons on the grassy plains between the Orange River and the Vaal. Never since the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt has there been a more remarkable emigration. Like the Israelites of old, the leaders of the Trek believed that they were leading their people out from a land of misrepresentation and oppression to a promised land of freedom. A generation of wandering and hardship, of warfare against overwhelming odds, of marvellous successes, confirmed in the minds of the emigrant farmers that comparison of themselves with the chosen people of the Old Testament, which has sunk so deep into the Boer character. The "voortrekkers" carried with them into their new homes a bitter hatred of the British Government and a profound suspicion of that modern civilisation which in their eyes consisted chiefly in a glorification of naked savages at the expense of men of white race. That hatred and that suspicion survived long after their causes had passed away. Though the events of sixty years ago afford no justification for the policy of the Transvaal which has led to the present war, that policy can only be understood in the light of past history.

The British Government was by the action of the farmers brought face to face with a difficult problem. It was unwilling to prevent the emigration by force. Already, in August, 1836, Sir Andries Stockenström, Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Province, had assured the farmers that he knew of no law preventing British subjects migrating to another country. But the Government refused to entertain for a moment the theory of the emigrants that on leaving British territory they immediately ceased to be British subjects and become citizens of any new state they chose to create. On the contrary, it assumed that the emigrants, though they had forfeited their claim to the protection of the Government by going beyond the borders of the colony,

The Government in a dilemma. The Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act, 1836.

could not divest themselves of any of their duties as British subjects. As a sign of its resolve to assert its claims over them, the Government, in 1836, passed an Act with the object of punishing and preventing offences committed by British subjects in all parts of Africa—excepting Portuguese territory—south of latitude 25°, and empowering the Governor to grant commissions to magistrates to arrest British subjects in such territories. The Act incidentally shows that Great Britain, even at that time, considered that her sphere of influence—the word Hinterland had not gained currency then—extended as far north as the present sites of Mafeking, Pretoria, and Lydenburg. As a matter of fact, the British Government never realised the serious character of the trek. It persuaded itself that the hardships of the wilderness and the attacks of the Kaffirs would ultimately force the emigrants to return in a chastened frame of mind to the blessings of British protection. It strove to aid the process by stopping all supplies, and especially ammunition, finding their way through to the Boers, and by concluding treaties with bastards and native tribes so as to hedge the Boers in. Such a policy of trying to worry the emigrants into submission was neither wise nor dignified. It only irritated them without changing them from their purpose. Before the end of 1837 the Boers discovered a feasible pass through the Drakensberg and a large party, under the leadership of Piet Retief, came down into Natal, at that time almost totally depopulated by the Zulus. At Port Natal (Durban) they found a small English settlement which had been established since 1824, but which the British Government had hitherto steadily refused to protect or recognise as a colony. The English settlers welcomed them in a friendly spirit. Dingaan, the Zulu chief, however, looked upon them with fear and suspicion, and determined to destroy them. To make sure of his object he entered into friendly relations with the emigrants, and offered to cede them the lands west of the Tugela. When Piet Retief came to arrange the cession, he and all his companions were treacherously murdered. At the same time the Zulu regiments fell upon the emigrants who were scattered over the country in fancied security. A large body of them

Petty and irritating policy of the Government.

1837–1843. The Boers in Natal.

were massacred at Weenen (weeping) on the Blaauwkranz River, and many smaller scattered parties suffered a similar fate, though most of the larger parties escaped by forming their waggons into laagers, which they defended with desperate courage. At Blood River, a few months later, the emigrants took their revenge and drove Dingaan in headlong flight from his capital of Umkungunhlovu with a loss of some three thousand of his men. December 16, Dingaan's Day, has ever since been celebrated as a day of national rejoicing by the Boers. Meanwhile commissioners had arrived in Natal in May, 1838, to persuade the emigrants to return to Cape Colony. Their persuasion had no effect, any more than a proclamation issued by Sir G. Napier promising the emigrants redress of well-founded grievances if they returned, but announcing that Her Majesty's Government could not permit further colonisation in South Africa, or the erection of a pretended independent state by any of Her Majesty's subjects, and that he would take military possession of Natal whenever he considered it advisable. While the Boers were defeating Dingaan in December a small force was landed at Port Natal. Sir G. Napier wished to have Natal declared a colony, but Lord Glenelg would only sanction a temporary military occupation. The objects of this occupation were, as Sir G. Napier stated in his despatch home, to stop all supplies and warlike stores entering the port, so as to prevent the emigrants establishing a separate government or carrying on war with the natives, and thus to cause the emigration to cease. In 1840 the force was withdrawn, but the controversy between Sir G. Napier and the emigrants still continued, the latter having declared themselves an independent Republic. An unprovoked attack by the Boers on a Pondo tribe, and a resolution of the Natal Volksraad to expel all natives out of Natal in 1841, decided the Governor to intervene again, and a force was prepared, which started in April 1842, to march to Port Natal overland through Kaffraria.

1838. The British Government interferes in Natal.

Meanwhile, in March, a Dutch brig, called the *Brazilia*, arrived, which had been equipped in Holland by a gentleman of the name of Ohrig and others who had heard of the Great Trek and the sufferings of the emigrants. This arrival led

Intrigues with Holland. Early Ambitions.

to the most exaggerated hopes among the emigrants of intervention from Holland in their behalf, which the supercargo Smellekamp was quite ready to encourage. The Natal Volksraad signed a treaty with that enterprising gentleman, by which they put themselves directly under the protection of the King of Holland. The incident is interesting as illustrating a phase in the policy of the emigrants. From the very first their leaders were inspired by the ambitious conception of founding a powerful independent Republic. In order to achieve this end they wished to secure a harbour of their own and enter into relations with Holland or other European powers, so as to render themselves entirely free from England—a not unjustifiable endeavour in view of the policy of stopping supplies initiated by the English Government. When Port Natal was occupied their hopes were directed to Delagoa, where the energetic Smellekamp turned up again in 1843 and was met by Hendrik Potgieter, the founder of the Transvaal. The policy of President Kruger was thus no original one, but as old as the first days of the Great Trek. Even that ambitious diplomatist, Dr. Leyds, had his counterpart in the Hollander supercargo.

1842. Boers besiege Durban.

The arrival at Port Natal in May of the small force under Captain Smith greatly incensed the Boers, who at once marched down from Maritzburg. After some mutual recriminations hostilities began, the first result of which was that Captain Smith lost over 100 men in a blundering night attack, and was closely invested and not relieved till the end of June by a force under Colonel Cloete. The Boers now retreated to Maritzburg and began quarrelling violently among themselves. The Republic of Natal had already lapsed into a state of hopeless anarchy, and now that they discovered that Durban was to be permanently taken from them and that their hopes of intervention from Holland were illusory, they began to realise the advantages that might result from coming to terms with the British Government. Negotiations were begun with Colonel Cloete, and the emigrants announced their readiness to submit and acknowledge their position as British subjects. In the next year Mr. Henry Cloete was sent as a special commissioner, and

Natal was, by the free consent of the emigrants, made a British colony with representative institutions on terms which let it be clearly understood that the mistaken policy which had led to the Great Trek would not be repeated. Sir George Napier's policy was thus successful and would have been completely so, but for the unwillingness of the British Government to expel from Natal a vast horde of fugitive Zulus who had overrun the country. This led to a considerable emigration of farmers who would otherwise have stayed. Mr. Cloete also visited Panda, who had succeeded Dingaan, and secured the enlargement of Northern Natal up to the Buffalo River, and the cession of St. Lucia harbour, the latter with the object of preventing the Boers trying to repeat their Port Natal policy at that place. He also strongly urged the Government to acquire Delagoa Bay from the Portuguese and thus render its position in South Africa perfectly secure, unfortunately without success.

1843. Mr. Cloete persuades the Boers in Natal to submit to the authority of the Government.

The emigrants north of the Drakensberg had meanwhile, after driving away the Matabele under Mosilikatse, spread themselves over the Northern Free State and on the further banks of the Vaal. Like their kinsfolk in Natal they soon fell into a state of anarchy. The country north of the Orange rapidly became an Alsatia for all sorts of desperate characters. Among the better class of farmers a strong party formed itself which advocated submission to British rule on the same conditions as those granted to the Boers in Natal. A petition asking for the assumption of British sovereignty over the country north of the Vaal was extensively signed and sent to Mr. Cloete, the Commissioner in Natal. Already in October, 1842, Justice Menzies had proclaimed the whole country east of longitude 22 and up to latitude 25 British territory, but his proclamation had been disallowed by Sir G. Napier. There would have been little difficulty in inducing the majority of the emigrants to accept British rule in the territories they now occupied north of the Orange River if, as in Natal, a reasonable instalment of self-government had been granted them. Unfortunately the good precedent set in Natal was not followed, so deeply rooted was

Anarchy north of the Orange River. A large party for establishment of British rule.

The futile policy of the Napier treaties.

the aversion of the Home Government to the idea of extending the boundaries of British sovereignty. The policy which found favour was one suggested by Dr. Philip, which consisted of surrounding the colony by a ring of independent native states to which large territories were assigned with the idea of excluding the emigrants from as much habitable land as possible. These states were purely fictitious, corresponding to no existing political units of any power or importance and created simply in accordance with the policy of harassing the emigrants. The Western Free State was acknowledged to be a Griqua or Bastard state under one Adam Kok, while the Eastern Free State and the mountain country was assigned to the Basuto Chief Moshesh. The emigrants were justly aggrieved. The Griquas were a small tribe of scattered hunters, emigrant British subjects just as much as they themselves; the Basutos had been hiding in caves in the mountains till the emigrants had come and driven away Mosilikatse and occupied the uninhabited plains devastated by the Matabele. The only reason why the Griquas and Basutos were recognised as owners of the territories was that they were coloured and savage and therefore naturally favoured by the British Government. The Griquas never prospered much and were afterwards moved to the districts still known as Griqualand West and Griqualand East, where a few of them still survive. Moshesh, on the other hand, the ablest native ruler South Africa has yet produced, made use of his official recognition by the British Government to create a nation, which had never yet existed, out of the scattered mountain tribes, a nation which was yet to prove a considerable thorn in the side of the British Government. The policy of the Napier treaties was as futile as it was irritating. If these states had been duly invented and the treaties had been made before the Trek, the help of the chiefs might perhaps have been made use of to stop the emigration. As it was the Government only viciously slammed the stable door after the horse had gone. Hundreds of emigrant families had already settled down in the regions apportioned to Kok and Moshesh, who had not the slightest intention of recognising the sovereignty of these brand-new potentates. The Government

itself, when it subsequently came to take over the Orange River territory, soon found itself obliged to make short work of the pretensions of its *protégés*. The policy was no sooner started than it was found unworkable in practice without some measure of direct control. Hostilities broke out between the Boers and Adam Kok, and in 1845 Captain Warden was appointed Resident across the Orange. In the following year the site of the present Bloemfontein was acquired from Adam Kok for the purpose of a seat for the residency. In 1847 Sir Harry Smith came out as Governor. The new Governor had as commander in the Kaffir war of 1835 won the affection and esteem of the colonists, and unlike the majority of Governors had a shrewd notion of the requirements of the country. He determined at once to put an end to the farce of the Napier treaties, to limit the Griquas and natives into definite reserves, and to make the rest of the country a colony where the emigrant farmers could live contentedly, their relations with the native chiefs being supervised by the Imperial Government. On February 3, 1848, the sovereignty of the Queen was proclaimed over the whole country between the Orange River and the Vaal, which was now called the Orange River Sovereignty. Sir Harry Smith's idea was, that such of the emigrants as were dissatisfied with this settlement should retire across the Vaal. But there was a strong irreconcilable and ambitious party among the emigrants on both sides of the Vaal who were by no means willing to see so large a tract of country come under British sovereignty and be lost to their Great Republic of the future. The leaders of the Republicans at Potchefstroom decided to prevent the new settlement by force. A considerable force was got together under A. W. Pretorius, who marched down from the Vaal and drove the British resident out of Winburg. In July Pretorius besieged Bloemfontein and compelled Warden to capitulate. Sir Harry Smith at once collected a force of some 800 men and crossed the Orange River. He was joined in the Sovereignty by a few of the farmers who were opposed to the violently Republican faction under Pretorius and Potgieter. On August 29 he came up with a force of some

Sir H. Smith introduces a forward policy. The Orange River Sovereignty.

Hostility of A. W. Pretorius. Battle of Boomplaatz, 1848.

800 Boers at Boomplaatz. Hostilities were precipitated by the Boers, who after a stiff engagement were compelled to take to flight. No further resistance was met with and the defeated faction recrossed the Vaal, taking with them a few of their adherents.

Progress of the Orange River Sovereignty.

Under the new administration the Orange River Sovereignty made rapid progress. Education, which had been completely neglected by the emigrants during the last twelve years, was provided for, churches and schools built. Now that order was established, the fertile grazing country of the new colony attracted many new colonists, a large proportion of whom were English and Scotch. The policy of following up the emigrants and securing for them the advantages of a strong impartial Government, while leaving them free to a large extent to administer their own affairs, was proving a decided success. A steadfast adherence to that policy would in all probability have led within the next ten years to the formation of a new colony beyond the Vaal, at the request of the emigrants themselves, followed in time by others. Civilised South Africa would thus have expanded northwards in a natural fashion by the gradual aggregation of new states, just as the United States expanded westwards across the continent of America. The bitterness of the Great Trek and the hatred of civilisation which it engendered would soon have passed away. The political dislocation of South Africa, which has proved so fatal a barrier to progress, would never have come into existence at all, and the white people of South Africa might have developed with a rapidity and to an extent which it is difficult to believe, with the history of the last fifty years before our eyes. From Great Fish Bay on the Atlantic to the mouth of the Zambesi might by the end of the century have been a confederated dominion under the British flag mainly peopled by a white South African nation of Dutch and English origin. But such ideas found no place in the minds of British statesmen of that period. The little England movement was in full progress and destined to dominate English politics for a whole generation to come. Sir Harry Smith's policy was viewed with suspicion at home.

Interference of the Home Government. The Sand River Convention, Jan. 17, 1852.

MR. KRUGER WHEN A FIELD CORNET.

(ABOUT 1852.)

The Home Government was absolutely determined that whatever happened there should be no further extension of territory, and that the first opportunity should be taken advantage of to abandon such territory as was already occupied. As a first step it resolved to recognise the independence of the Boers beyond the Vaal. Commissioners were sent and on January 17, 1852, a Convention was signed at the Sand River by which the British Government guaranteed to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal the right to manage their own affairs and govern themselves by their own laws, undertook not to prevent any British subject from crossing the Vaal into Republican territory, and disclaimed all alliances with native tribes to the north of the Vaal. The farmers on their side promised to grant full liberty of trade and to permit no slavery. The Convention was signed on the Boer side by no regularly constituted authority owing to the feud between the Potgieter and Pretorius factions, but only by A. W. Pretorius and a number of his partisans. After much quarrelling, however, a temporary reconciliation was patched up between the two chief parties and the Convention ratified by the Volksraad. But the British Government was by no means content with this surrender of sovereignty. It found itself involved in a quarrel with Moshesh as an outcome of the encouragement it had previously given to his pretensions. The farmers of the Orange River Sovereignty showed no great anxiety to take their share of the fighting. Altogether the new territory was a trouble and an expense, and the Government resolved to withdraw south of the Orange altogether. Already in October, 1851, Earl Grey had written to Sir Harry Smith that the ultimate abandonment of the Sovereignty should be a settled point in the Imperial policy. In 1852, Sir Harry Smith having in the interval been succeeded by Sir G. Cathcart, a commission under the Great Seal was issued to Sir G. Russell Clerk appointing him special commissioner to settle the affairs of the Orange River Sovereignty, in other words, to withdraw British authority with the best grace possible. The commissioner arrived in August and called upon the inhabitants to elect delegates to determine

The Withdrawal from the Orange River Sovereignty against the wish of the inhabitants, 1854.

on a form of self-government. The delegates, 76 Dutch and 19 English, flatly refused to renounce their rights of British citizenship, and when Sir G. Clerk began negotiating with irresponsible individuals of no standing, offering to put the government in their hands, the delegates declared that they would nail the flag half-mast high and hold out till they could lay their protest before the Imperial Parliament, which alone they declared was empowered to alienate British territory. But it was no use. The withdrawal was carried out and the indignant inhabitants left to manage for themselves as best they could, without resources and at the mercy of a powerful and aggressive native state on their flank. As a small consolation some £45,000 was allotted to various individuals as compensation for loss occasioned by change of government. Unlike the Sand River Convention, which only guaranteed the right of self-government, the Convention of Bloemfontein, by which the Orange Free State was established, expressly absolved the inhabitants from their allegiance and declared their government to be a free and independent government. On March 11, 1854, the British flag was hauled down and a new Republican flag took its place.

The policy of non-interference an impossible one.

The Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions mark the conclusion of an important chapter in the history of South Africa. The British Government, after eighteen years of interference with its emigrant subjects, during which it had experimented with every conceivable policy, pursuing none for more than a year or two at a time, finally resolved to leave them to themselves. It was a thoroughly mistaken resolution, one which in the very nature of things could not really be kept, unless indeed the Government had resolved to abandon the whole of South Africa, except Cape Town, by successive stages. To set an artificial barrier between two portions of a homogeneous population was only to retard progress and sow the seeds of future discord. The existence of independent Dutch Republics on the borders of Cape Colony, precluding its natural expansion, inevitably produced a state of dissatisfaction in the colony which in the end could only be cured by the final withdrawal of the Imperial

Government from South Africa, or by the abolition of the Republics. No better summary of the whole situation and of the duty of the British Government to South Africa can be found than in the following remarks from MacKenzie's 'Austral Africa.'

"The British Government, till quite recently, has never recognised the principle of growth of the European race in South Africa. It has simply shut its eyes to the fact. This is the real secret of the opposition to the Imperial Government in South Africa, and it is not an unreasonable opposition. . . .

"If the United States were right in regulating the spread of white men westward, and if the Northern States were right in determining at all hazards to maintain inviolate the union of the United States, then was the British Government wrong in South Africa when it allowed one swarm after another to pass out of the colony northward and assume independence on its borders. This was bad policy in the interests, commercial and otherwise, of the Imperial Government itself ; it was unjust and short-sighted towards our colonists in South Africa ; it was no kindness, but the opposite, towards the communities whose separation secured our sanction. . . . The crowning act of this short-sightedness was the Sand River Convention."

The withdrawal was an impossibility. Interference in affairs north of the Orange River was inevitably thrust upon the Imperial Government by the wars between the Boers and the natives, and later by the rush of emigrants to the diamond mines and the gold-fields. To quote MacKenzie again: "In a left-handed, inconsequent and hazy manner the English Government was still supreme in the country, and tacitly so recognised even among the independent states." If the Sand River Convention was mistaken, the withdrawal from the Orange Sovereignty was morally unjustifiable. It was a craven dereliction of duty, inspired by no higher motive than the desire to save expense and trouble. To the bitterness engendered by the mistakes of twenty years ago it added a contempt which certain subsequent events only strengthened in the minds of Dutch and English in South Africa, a contempt which in no small measure has been responsible for the troubles which have since arisen.

Subsequent history of the Orange Free State. President Brand.

The history of the Orange Free State for the next quarter of a century bears only to a small extent on the relationship between the Imperial Government and the Republics. Its inhabitants embraced all the best and most moderate elements of the original emigrants joined by many colonists who had subsequently come up from the colony. They took to their independence regretfully but with a manly determination to make the best of their position. Fortunately they found men of ability and patriotism to conduct their private affairs. For twenty-five years, from 1863 to 1888, the policy of the Free State was directed by John Brand, a man of wide views and sound judgment, eager to promote in every way the social and moral welfare of his people. John Brand, though he believed in an ultimate federation of South Africa under an independent Republican flag, fully understood the importance of the part played by the Imperial Government in the development and civilisation of South Africa, and was always ready to co-operate with it as far as possible. His prudence and moderation prevented any serious friction resulting from the few occasions on which the policy of the Imperial Government came into conflict with that of the Free State. The first was in 1868, when Sir Philip Wodehouse interfered to save the Basutos from complete subjugation by the Free State, and at Moshesh's request incorporated Basutoland in the British sphere, with the exception of a small but extremely fertile strip of territory which was ceded to the conquerors. The second was in 1871, when Great Britain occupied the diamond fields. The land was claimed both by the Free State and by a Griqua captain named Waterboer, who offered to give it to Great Britain and become a British subject. The Free State refused to arbitrate, and Great Britain, relying on the definition of the extent of Waterboer's country given by Governor Keate of Natal in a recent arbitration between the Transvaal and certain native chiefs, sent an armed force to occupy the mines. President Brand went to England to protest, and the Government finally agreed to give the Free State £90,000 on the understanding that it waived its claim. The annexation of the diamond fields only showed the impracticability of the policy

1868. Sir P. Wodehouse incorporates Basutoland.

1871. Great Britain occupies the diamond fields.

of 1854. The British Government felt itself obliged for the sake of law and order to control the large miscellaneous population which had collected in search of treasure. But by its past policy it had precluded itself from direct administrative interference in the Free State, and accordingly had to have recourse to the doubtful device of basing its claims on those of a half-caste chief. Much has since been made by the Boers and their advocates of this annexation, but there is little doubt that President Brand was not dissatisfied with getting rid of a large and turbulent uitlander population and receiving in exchange a lump sum of money large enough to enable him to create a national bank.

The Transvaal. Its turbulent character.

The development of the Transvaal took place on very different lines to that of the Free State. Its population was, to begin with, of a very different character, comprising all the more irreconcilable of the emigrants who had left Natal and the Sovereignty sooner than submit to British rule, besides a number of violent and lawless characters who had at various times since the Great Trek crossed over the Vaal River. For many years after the Sand River Convention it was a declared policy of the Transvaal Boers to cut themselves off entirely from the outside world. The promise implied in the Sand River Convention with reference to freedom of travel and residence for missionaries and traders was disregarded. Mission stations were attacked and looted —as in the case of Dr. Livingstone. Traders were fined for publishing descriptions of the trade roads. A law was passed to prevent Englishmen and Germans from holding land. It was not likely that the men who had undergone such great hardships to escape from a Government which set the natives on an equality with white men should be particularly well disposed to the former. Under the title of apprenticeship slavery was practically re-introduced, and the campaigns of the Boers against the native tribes rapidly degenerated into mere slave-raids, in many cases accompanied by the most brutal atrocities. In 1859 Marthinus Pretorius made an attempt to stop the evil by a proclamation calling the attention of local magistrates to the provisions of the Convention, but without much effect. As late as 1876

Ill-treatment of natives.

the Bechuana Chief Khama wrote to the British Government appealing for protection against the Boers—"The Boers are coming into my country and I do not like them. Their actions are cruel amongst us black people. We are like money. They sell us and our children. The custom of the Boers has always been to cause people to be sold, and to-day they are still selling people. Last year I saw them pass with two waggons full of people whom they had bought at the river at Tanane."

Anarchy in the Transvaal. The four Republics. The Pretorius-Kruger Raid, 1857. Presidency of M. W. Pretorius, 1864–1871.

Politically the country north of the Vaal was in a state of hopeless anarchy. It split up into the four Republics of Potchefstroom, Zoutpansberg, Lydenburg and Utrecht, which were mostly at war with one another. In 1857 Marthinus Pretorius, who, as the result of a revolution had recently made himself President of the Potchefstroom Republic, aided by Commandant Paul Kruger, carried out an unsuccessful armed raid into the Free State with the hope of upsetting the Government, annexing the Free State and putting himself and his confederate at the head of affairs. The Raiders had reckoned on receiving support from a discontented faction in the Free State. In this they were disappointed, and when Pretorius got as far as the Rhenoster River he heard that the other Transvaal Republics threatened to attack Potchefstroom from the north. He accordingly sent Paul Kruger with a flag of truce to ask permission for the Raiders to withdraw. Those of their confederates in the Free State who remained behind were tried for high treason and fined. That Paul Kruger should have so curiously anticipated Dr. Jameson is interesting. The Pretorius-Kruger Raid was even more reprehensible than the Rhodes-Jameson Raid, if the assertion of President Boshof, of the Free State, is to be believed, that its authors had asked Moshesh, the Basuto chief, to make a simultaneous attack on that Republic. In 1860 the four Republics agreed to unite, but shortly afterwards civil war broke out again, and it was not until 1864 that the Government of the "South African Republic" was finally established under the presidency of Pretorius. Paul Kruger became at the same time Commandant-General. A reminiscence of the period when the four Republics existed

is to be found in the "Vierkleur" or four-coloured Transvaal flag. During these years of anarchy the native tribes, who had been almost exterminated by the Matabele before the latter had been driven away by the emigrants, had rapidly recovered strength, and partly emboldened by the quarrels of the whites, and partly driven to desperation by the treatment they received, now became restless. For four years Kruger waged an unsuccessful war against the Chief Magato in the north, which ended in 1868 in the withdrawal of the Boers from almost the whole of the Zoutpansberg district. Hostilities then broke out with Montsioa and other Baralong chiefs on the western border, who refused to recognise the sovereignty of the South African Republic. The Republic, being much too exhausted and impoverished to fight, the President in 1871 submitted the question to Mr. Keate, the Governor of Natal, who pronounced in favour of the Chiefs. Dissatisfaction in the Transvaal was so great that Pretorius resigned.

Degeneracy of the Transvaal Boers. Transvaal ambitions.

Cut off from the outside world, engaged in ceaseless warfare with the natives or each other, the Boers of the Transvaal rapidly degenerated into almost complete barbarism. The majority of the burghers lived in miserable poverty, but even those who were better off resolutely refused to pay any taxes. As a result there was no money for schools or public buildings, telegraphs, roads, or bridges. The salaries of officials were hardly ever paid—a state of things which laid the seeds of that official corruptness which subsequently became so striking a feature of Transvaal officialdom—the Treasury always empty. Yet in spite of all this the leading men among the burghers continued to cherish the aspirations of future greatness which had inspired Potgieter and Pretorius, and which were indicated by the ambitious title of the South African Republic. They considered that all the country north of the Vaal, from Delagoa Bay to the Atlantic, belonged to them of right, and that their Republic was the legitimate reversioner to the rest of South Africa. It is impossible to appreciate properly the policy pursued by President Kruger from 1884 to 1899, unless one takes into account, not only the dislike of England and the aversion to

all modern civilisation peculiarly characteristic of the Transvaal Boer, but also the ambitions which inspired some of the leaders of the Great Trek, and which afterwards crystallised round the South African Republic. Already in the sixties, in the Colony as well as in the Republics, clergymen, lawyers, and schoolmasters, who had been educated in Europe and fallen under the influence of the nationality fashion which was set on foot by the events of 1848, preached the ideal of an Afrikander nation united under its own flag and free of all external control.

CHAPTER III

THE ANNEXATION AND ITS REVERSAL

Election of Mr. Burgers as President. July 1872.

Upon the resignation of Pretorius the presidency of the Transvaal was offered to John Brand, who wisely declined the proffered honour, having no desire to see the Free State brought into closer contact with Transvaal politics. It was accepted by Mr. T. F. Burgers, a clergyman from Cape Colony. Burgers was a man of considerable ability and great persuasiveness. He was full of confidence in himself and his ability to make the Transvaal a great and powerful state, the nucleus of a future united Dutch South Africa. He was eager to bring it into closer relationship with the continent of Europe and more especially with Holland, so as to counteract the spread of English influence. At the same time Burgers was thoroughly liberal and progressive in his political and religious views. He threw himself with vigour into the task of reforming the State. He persuaded the Volksraad to sanction the construction of a railway from Pretoria (which had been the capital since 1860) to Delagoa Bay, and went to Europe in order to raise a loan for this railway, but only with partial success. He tried to reform the administration, to levy taxes, to establish a system of public education, and generally to elevate the country from the demoralised state into which it had fallen. He encouraged immigration, and adopted a thoroughly liberal policy towards the mining and trading population which was now being attracted by the discovery of gold in the Lydenburg and Barberton districts. He exerted his influence in the Volksraad to secure the representation of the mining districts in that body by two members elected by the Uitlanders. His policy was thus

Mr. Burgers' liberal attitude to the Uitlanders.

in striking contrast to that which prevailed afterwards when the insurrection had put the most reactionary elements in the country into power. But Burgers was not a good judge of men. He failed to realise how completely the Transvaal Boers had lapsed into barbarism and how slow and difficult a process it would be to bring about reforms. His initial popularity waned rapidly when the Boers found that he wanted to alter their whole life, to civilise them, and, worst of all, to make them pay taxes. In 1876 the Sikukuni war broke out. The first attempts to attack Sikukuni in his strongholds proved entirely unsuccessful. The Boer commandos showed a hopeless lack of spirit, and finally refused to serve in the field any longer. Burgers now tried to raise a paid force of volunteers, mainly foreigners. But this involved an increase of taxation. The burghers refused to pay or assist the Government in any way. The State owed £215,000 and there was not a penny in the treasury. The one-pound notes issued by the Government sank to one shilling. Salaries were unpaid. A strong reactionary party led by Paul Kruger declared that the misfortunes of the State were a heaven-sent visitation for the liberal religious views of the President. Without any regard for the public interest, Kruger and his faction did all in their power to make government impossible. Without money, without men, torn by the violence of factions, with a triumphant native enemy within its borders, with Zulus and other native tribes on the frontier eager to seize the occasion of avenging themselves on the hereditary foe, the condition of the Transvaal was almost desperate. The only alternative to annihilation seemed to be to place itself under British protection. A strong movement for calling in the British started in all the towns or rather villages of the Transvaal. The miners and traders, naturally enough, threw in their voice for a change which they hoped might bring good government with it. The back country Boers were indifferent. As Dr. Jorissen, one of Kruger's chief agents in the insurrection, says in his Reminiscences, "there was no such thing as Transvaal patriotism. Each Boer lived on his own farm free from any relations with

1876. The Sikukuni war. Poverty of the state. Intrigues of the Kruger faction. Pro-annexation movement.

MARTHINUS WESSELS PRETORIUS.

PRESIDENT OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE, 1859–1864.
PRESIDENT OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1864–1872.

REV. THOMAS FRANÇOIS BURGERS.

PRESIDENT OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1872–1877.

the Government." The whole country was in a state of chaos.

Change in England in favour of a more active colonial policy.

Meanwhile in England a gradual change had been coming over public opinion with regard to the colonies. The narrow little Englandism of the middle of the century was beginning to be abandoned by political thinkers, and one at least of the two great political parties now ventured openly to profess its eagerness to hold together and strengthen the British Empire. In 1859 Sir George Grey, perhaps the ablest administrator ever sent by Great Britain to South Africa, had been recalled for a time by a timorous Government for urging a scheme of South African Federation which should embrace the Republics —a scheme which met with the approval of the Free State and might at that time have been carried through without difficulty. In 1876, however, the Confederation of South Africa was a prospect warmly entertained by Lord Carnarvon, then Secretary of State for the Colonies. In view of such a federation the condition of the Transvaal and the serious prospect of its annihilation by the surrounding tribes were matters which could not but be of interest to the Imperial Government. It knew that a considerable section of the inhabitants were eager for intervention or annexation, and it was not unwilling to avail itself of an opportunity which it believed would favour the chances of confederation. Accordingly Sir Theophilus Shepstone, an able man and intimately acquainted with the character of both Boers and natives, was sent to the Transvaal with a special commission to inquire into the affairs of that state, and if he thought advisable, and a sufficient number of the inhabitants wished it, proclaim the Transvaal British territory. On December 20, 1876, Shepstone wrote to President Burgers informing him of his intention to visit the Transvaal in order to secure a satisfactory solution of its present difficulties. Shortly afterwards he started for Pretoria from Natal accompanied by an escort of twenty-five policemen. On his way he everywhere met with a hearty welcome. In Pretoria an enthusiastic crowd took the horses out of his carriage and drew him in triumph through the streets. Shepstone made no disguise of the object of his visit. At his first interview with Burgers he

1876. Lord Carnarvon and confederation. Mission of Sir T. Shepstone.

declared that it was his intention to annex the country, unless adequate and effective reforms could be introduced. Meanwhile he should wait and inquire further into the condition of the country and the sentiments of the burghers. A Joint Commission of inquiry was appointed on which the Boer members were Mr. Kruger and Dr. Jorissen, the latter a Hollander clergyman who had been recently imported by Burgers and made State Attorney. The Commission, however, did nothing. Petitions came in freely demanding annexation, some 3,000 signatures in all being sent in of a total adult male population of 8,000. Many more who did not sign petitions would have done so but for the fear of compromising themselves if the annexation did not take place. Shepstone simply waited and held his hand. The President called the Volksraad together in the hope of getting them to unite on some reasonable scheme of reform in order to avert the impending annexation. But the Volksraad was much more intent on its own quarrels than on preserving the independence of the State. Kruger, who had been nominated candidate for the presidency, was determined to upset Burgers at any cost. When the question of confederation was brought forward by Burgers, Kruger's influence secured its contemptuous rejection. A scheme of reforms was proposed by Burgers giving the President almost monarchical power. It was equally set aside. Burgers entreated and implored the Volksraad to realise the seriousness of their position. He reproached members for proclaiming views in public diametrically opposed to those privately expressed by them on the questions of confederation and annexation. His earnest appeal to them on March 3, during the discussion on confederation, has often been quoted—

1877. Shepstone in the Transvaal. Burgers vainly endeavours to induce the Volksraad to introduce any reforms.

"I would rather be a policeman under a strong government than a president of such a State. It is you, you members of the Raad and the Boers, who have lost the country, who have sold your independence for a *soupie* (a drink). You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty. . . .

"We should delude ourselves by entertaining the hope that matters would mend by-and-by. It would be only self-deceit. I

tell you openly, matters are as bad as they ever can be; they cannot be worse. These are bitter truths, and people may perhaps turn their backs on me; but then I shall have the consolation of having done my duty. . . .

President Burgers' speech on confederation.

"It is said here, this or that man must be released from taxes because the Kaffirs have driven them off their farms and occupy the latter. By this you proclaim to the world that the strongest man is master here, that the right of the strongest obtains here. (Mr. Maré: This is not true.) Then it is not true what the honourable member, Mr. Breytenbach, has told us about the state of the Lydenburg district; then it is not true either what another member has said about the farms in Saltpansberg, which are occupied by Kaffirs. Neither is it true then what I saw with my own eyes at Lydenburg, where the burghers had been driven off their farms by the Kaffirs, and where Johannes was ploughing and sowing on the land of a burgher. These are facts, and they show that the strongest man is the master here. The fourth point which we have to take into account affects our relations with our English neighbours. It is asked, what have they got to do with our position? I tell you, as much as we have to do with that of our Kaffir neighbours. As little as we can allow barbarities among the Kaffirs on our borders, as little can they allow that in a state on their borders anarchy and rebellion should prevail. . . .

"Do you know what has recently happened in Turkey? Because no civilised government was carried on there, the Great Powers interfered and said, 'Thus far and no farther.' And if this is done to an empire, will a little republic be excused when it misbehaves? . . .

"Complain to other Powers and seek justice there? Yes, thank God! justice is still to be found, even for the most insignificant; but it is precisely the justice which will convict us. If we want justice, we must be in a position to ask it with unsullied hands. . . .

"Whence has arisen that urgency to make an appeal for interference elsewhere? Has that appeal been made only by enemies of the State? Oh, no, gentlemen; it has arisen from real grievances. Our people have degenerated from their former position; they have become demoralised; they are not what they ought to be. . . .

* * * * *

"To-day a bill for £1100 was laid before me for signature;

He rebukes the Volksraad. The lack of patriotism.

but I would sooner have cut off my right hand than sign that paper, for I have not the slightest ground to expect that when that bill becomes due there will be a penny to pay it with."

The President added, and his statements remained uncontradicted—

"The principal thing which had brought them to their present position was that to which they would not give attention; it was not this or that thing which impeded their way, but they themselves stopped the way; and if they asked him what prevented the people from remaining independent, he answered that the Republic was itself the obstruction, owing to the inherent incapacity and weakness of the people. But whence this weakness? Was it because they were deformed, because they were worse than other people? Because they were too few and insignificant to occupy the country? Those arguments did not weigh with him. They were not true; he did not consider them of any importance. The people were as good as any other people, but they were completely demoralised, they had lost faith in God, reliance upon themselves, or trust in each other. Hence he believed they were inherently weak.

* * * * *

"He did not believe that a new constitution would save them, for as little as the old constitution had brought them to ruin, so little would a new constitution bring them salvation.

* * * * *

"The Great Powers with all their greatness, all their thousands of soldiers, would fall as quickly as this State had fallen, and even more quickly, if their citizens were to do what the citizens of this State had done; if the citizens of England had behaved towards the Crown as the Burghers of this State had behaved to their Government, England would never have stood as long as she had, not even as long as this State had stood. The State owed obligations to other countries; they knew that the fire which had nearly consumed this State would, if felt by them, very soon consume them also.

* * * * *

"In several of the cities of Holland there were people who had subscribed for only one debenture, because they thought men of their own blood were living in South Africa. What was the consequence? The interest up to July last had been paid; in

January of this year, £2250 was due for interest, and there was not a penny to meet it.

* * * * *

"To take up arms and fight was nonsense; to draw the sword would be to draw the sword against God, for it was God's judgment that the State was in the condition it was to-day, and it was their duty to inquire whether they should immerse in blood the thousands of innocent inhabitants of this country, and if so, what for. For an idea: something they had in their heads, but not in their hearts—for an independence which is not prized? Let them make the best of the situation, and get the best terms they possibly could; let them agree to join their hands to those of their brethren in the south, and then from the Cape to the Zambesi there would be one great people. Yes, there was something grand in that, grander even than their idea of a republic, something which ministered to their national feeling. And would this be so miserable? Yes, this would be miserable for those who would not be under the law, for the rebel and the revolutionist, but welfare and prosperity for the men of law and order.

The advantages of federation with the rest of South Africa.

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"They must not underrate their real and many difficulties. He could point to the south-western border, the Zulu, the gold fields and other questions, and show them that it was their duty to come to an arrangement with the British Government, and to do so in a bold and manly manner. An hon. member on Saturday last had spoken with fervent patriotism, but he had failed to appreciate the reference, because it amounted to this—that they must shut their eyes to everything so as to keep their independence."

Shepstone thought he had waited long enough. There were no signs of any reforms being taken in hand seriously. The native menace was growing daily and a Zulu invasion—which in fact was only just staved off by the annexation—was imminent. He told the Executive Council that the only remedy possible for the condition of the Transvaal was its absorption in the British Empire. The Volksraad, under Kruger's influence, now became suddenly active. It censured Burgers and appointed Kruger vice-president. Burgers' new constitution was hurriedly passed, together with a treason law making all public expression of opinion against the

Government, or for annexation, high treason. The Volksraad then prorogued. Agitation in the country increased, the Kruger party working actively to secure Kruger's election and to get up a movement against English interference. Meanwhile in Cape Colony and the Orange Free State the expounders of the new Afrikander nationalism in the Dutch press carried on a vigorous campaign against the proposed surrender by the Transvaal Boers of the future hopes of Afrikanderdom. On April 9 Shepstone informed the Government of the Republic that he was about to declare the Transvaal British territory without delay. He communicated the text of his proposed proclamation to President Burgers, who suggested the omission of a clause, and in his turn showed Shepstone a protest he had prepared to clear himself of any suspicion of having prearranged the annexation. On April 12 the proclamation of annexation was read out in the Market Square of Pretoria to an enthusiastic crowd. The President's protest was received in respectful silence. On the last day of its existence the Executive Council appointed two of its members, Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen, to go to England and appeal against the annexation, and in case of failure to invoke the help of the other Powers. The protest and the mission were generally regarded at the time as mere matters of form. Everybody knew that the whole business had been practically arranged beforehand between Shepstone and the Government. Here is the account given by Sir Theophilus Shepstone to his official superiors of the transaction:—

April 12, 1877. First annexation of the Transvaal. The prearranged protest. The first deputation to England.

"There will be a protest against my act of annexation. . . . You need not be disquieted by such action, because it is taken merely to save appearances and the members of the Government from the violence of a faction that seems for years to have held Pretoria in terror when any act of the Government displeased it.

"You will better understand this when I tell you privately that the President has from the first fully acquiesced in the necessity for the change, and that most of the members of the Government have expressed themselves anxious for it, but none of them have had the courage openly to express their opinions. . . .

Yesterday morning Mr. Burgers came to me to arrange how the matter should be done. I read to him the draft of my proclamation. . . . He brought to me a number of conditions which he wished me to insert, which I have accepted and have embodied in my proclamation. He told me he could not help issuing a protest to keep the noisy portion of his people quiet. . . . Mr. Burgers read me, too, the draft of his protest and asked me if I saw any objection to it or thought it too strong. I said that it appeared to me to pledge the people to resist by-and-by, to which he replied that it was to tide over the difficulty of the moment, seeing that my support—the troops—were a fortnight's march distant, and that by the time the answer to the protest came all desire of opposition would have died out. I therefore did not persuade him from his protest."

Satisfaction in the Transvaal with the annexation.

The annexation was received with almost universal satisfaction in the Transvaal. The *Volksstem* and other Transvaal newspapers all agreed that it was inevitable and that the Boers had better acquiesce and make the best of the new situation. The Cape and Free State papers alone protested. A few weeks later a Dr. Jooste, writing to the editor of the *Zuid Afrikaan* (since become *Ons Land*), stated that he had just returned from a tour through the whole Transvaal and that his opinion was that fully ninety-six per cent. of the burghers were satisfied with the annexation. Even Dr. Jorissen confesses in his Reminiscences that "Shepstone convinced almost everybody that his action was a blessing and that England was annexing the Transvaal out of sheer philanthropy." Elsewhere he suggests that if it had not been for the subsequent incredible blunders of the British Government there would have been no revolution and the "cause of Afrikanderdom" would have suffered a premature decease. Even those who protested most before the annexation acquiesced readily when it was completed. The Executive Council, the officials of the old Government, with the single exception of Piet Joubert, found no difficulty in accepting office under the new *régime*. When the commission of protest left for England on May 9, Shepstone wrote: "Mr. Paul Kruger and Dr. Jorissen leave to-day. I do not think that either of them wishes the act of annexation to be

cancelled; Dr. Jorissen certainly does not." In England the envoys took their mission lightly. Finding Lord Carnarvon determined they acquiesced cheerfully in his decision and returned to South Africa to take up their positions under the British Administration, without wasting time in going round Europe to plead a cause that they themselves scarcely believed in. It has often been said that Shepstone's action was too hasty, and that if he had waited a few months the Transvaal would have asked for annexation of its own accord. It is easy to make such a criticism after the event. The fact remains that by annexing, Shepstone was in time to forestall a Zulu invasion, which would in all probability have been combined with a general native outbreak, and that if the policy he had desired to carry out had not been abandoned, there would never have been any revolt. The Boers revolted, not because they had been annexed against their will, but, partly, because the causes that led them to acquiesce in annexation were removed, and still more because the British administration was harsh and unsympathetic, and because the promises made to them were dishonestly evaded. The same causes would have produced the same effect even if the annexation had been by formal request of the Volksraad. What is true, perhaps, is that if the annexation had come by request, the pro-Boer agitation in England would never have reached such a height. But it is surely too much to hold Shepstone responsible for the subsequent vagaries of a misguided and factious public at home. The annexation was carried out with remarkable tact and skill after three months' deliberation, in concert with the Government of the state which was being annexed, and by general consent of the people. It was amply justified by the situation in the Transvaal, by its hopeless bankruptcy, by the general anarchy prevailing, by the decay of civilisation, by the failure of the Boers to hold their own against the natives in the Transvaal, by the danger of Zulu invasion, and by the legitimate desire of the Imperial Government to bring about a South African confederation.

Discussion of Shepstone's action. Its justification.

The first result of the annexation was a general revival of prosperity. British gold paid the interest on the public debt,

and the salaries of the officials. British troops secured the country from the fear of local native risings. The protection of the British flag induced a large immigration of traders and others who wished to settle in the country. The value of land increased enormously. The revenue doubled itself. In two years the trade of the country rose from almost nothing to two millions a year. In 1879 the Zulu power was broken and Sikukuni subdued. The Boers had obtained to the full the benefits of annexation. The causes which prompted them to submit to it no longer existed. The new Government was in many ways irksome and unsympathetic. The Boers began to regret the loss of their independence. That regret was quickened into an active desire to get rid of the British Government, by the mistakes of the latter, and by the persistent agitation carried on by Mr. Kruger and his supporters.

Rapid recovery of the Transvaal under British rule. The Boers nevertheless regret their independence.

Some description of that extraordinary man, whose history has been so largely the history of the Transvaal, may not be out of place here. Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger was born at Rustenburg, near Colesberg, in 1825. He took part in the Great Trek as a boy of twelve—old enough to be fully imbued with the spirit of the "voortrekkers," and with their hatred of England. His family, after many wanderings, settled at Rustenburg, in the Transvaal. Endowed with exceptional bodily strength, and skill in the use of the rifle, brave, iron-willed, persuasive, resourceful and unscrupulous, he soon distinguished himself among his fellows. He took a prominent part in wars against the Kaffirs and in the civil wars of the Transvaal. His part in Pretorius' raid into the Free State has already been referred to. In 1864 he was elected the first Commandant-General of the united Republic. On all questions of politics or religion—and these in the Transvaal have always been intimately connected—Mr. Kruger represented the narrow pietism, the mediæval conservatism, and the anti-foreign prejudices of the "Dopper" sect to which his family belonged. When Burgers became President, Kruger put himself at the head of the extreme reactionary party, and did all in his power to thwart him and make government an impossibility. Burgers afterwards

Character and position of Mr. Kruger.

openly accused him of having assisted the agitation to bring in the English, simply to upset the existing *régime*. When the annexation was actually imminent, he did all he could to oppose it, hoping to make it fall through, to get the blame of Shepstone's intervention thrown upon Burgers, and then to get elected President himself. He was much too ambitious and headstrong to rest content with a subordinate position under the British administration. He held that he had been unjustly cheated of the Presidency by the annexation, and he determined that the annexation should yet be reversed, and he become President. He had, as a young man, seen the English Government abandon the Free State because it was a troublesome possession, and he made up his mind that he should make the Transvaal troublesome too. In November, 1877, his appointment as member of the Executive Council expired. The Government refused to re-appoint him because of his hostile attitude, and because he had by misrepresentation or possibly owing to a misunderstanding added an extra £100 to his salary. The refusal was a mistake. Henceforward he was irreconcilable. The anti-British agitation was worked up with tremendous vigour. The majority of the Boers were terrorised by Kruger's followers into attending at the great meetings which were held from time to time during the annexation. One can safely say that, without Kruger's incessant and untiring activity, the Boers would never have revolted, and that, up to the actual outbreak of hostilities, a secret ballot would have shown a majority against revolting. At the same time, Kruger discouraged a resort to force as long as he had the slightest hope that the policy of alternate entreaty and intimidation might succeed.

He determines to secure the reversal of the annexation.

The British administration, meanwhile, committed blunder after blunder. Shepstone, in his proclamation, had promised the Boers free representative institutions, and had sent home a scheme, which was at once pigeon-holed. Nothing was done, no Volksraad was called together, and the Boers had good reason to complain that they were deprived of their liberties. Our policy was as weak as it was unjust. Shepstone's proclamation against seditious agitation could not be enforced,

Folly and injustice of the British Government.

MR. KRUGER IN 1867.

COMMANDANT-GENERAL OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1864-1873.

From Photo in the Possession of the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain.

as there was no proper garrison, and only made things worse. The old error of trying to do a great thing "on the cheap" proved fatal once more. An adequate police force could have suppressed the agitation and protected outlying farmers from being terrorised into joining it. But the British Government was resolved that, having gained possession of the Transvaal for nothing, it should disburse nothing to make that possession secure. The agitation went on vigorously. In 1878 Kruger again went to London with Joubert on a deputation to Sir M. Hicks-Beach, who had succeeded Lord Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary. The second deputation was as fruitless as the first. Early in 1879 came the disaster of Isandhlwana. The Transvaal malcontents saw that the absence of troops in Zululand and the dejection of the British public were their opportunity. A petition had been signed in the preceding year by over 6500 signatures, protesting against the annexation. If the figures were genuine, a number of those who signed must have been among those who signed pro-annexation petitions. A mass meeting of over 3000 Boers was collected near Pretoria in March, and practically besieged the town. To make matters worse, Shepstone, who enjoyed the confidence and respect of the Boers, by whom he was regarded almost as one of themselves, was at this juncture called home and succeeded by Colonel [afterwards Sir Owen] Lanyon, whose injudicious conduct and arrogant military manner still further estranged the Boers. In April Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner, came and parleyed with the Boer leaders, offering to consider their reasonable grievances, but refusing absolutely to discuss the restoration of independence. The assembly eventually dispersed peacefully, but Kruger, Joubert and Pretorius, who now emerged as the leaders of the irreconcilables, saw clearly that the British Government was much too feeble to prevent the outbreak of a rising. Frere, during his stay in the Transvaal, had convinced himself of two things: first of all, that the majority of the Boers, even of those who were camped with Kruger and Joubert, were at heart against the annexation, but dared not proclaim their real sentiments because they still dreaded

1879. Recall of Sir T. Shepstone. Appointment of Colonel Lanyon.

the possibility of a reversal of the annexation by the British Government; and, secondly, that the Boers had a genuine grievance in the failure of the British Government to keep its promise and establish some proper form of representative Government. In his despatches to the Colonial Office, Frere insisted on the necessity of leaving no doubt on the former point. As regards the latter he drew up the outlines of a liberal constitution for the Transvaal, in consultation with President Brand, Sir H. de Villiers, Chief Justice of Cape Colony, Mr. (afterwards Sir Gordon) Sprigg, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and other statesmen of South African experience. But before his recommendations could be carried into effect, he was succeeded, in June 1879, in the control of Transvaal affairs by Sir G. Wolseley (now Viscount Wolseley). An Executive Council and Legislative Assembly were now created with powers so limited, and so completely at the mercy of the Governor, that the Boers were only the more convinced that there was no intention ever to fulfil Shepstone's promise. To crown all, the end of the year brought out to South Africa Mr. Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches, which were freely distributed in the Transvaal as pamphlets. In terms of the most unmeasured invective, Mr. Gladstone, for the benefit of the Mid-Lothian electorate, denounced the annexation as a hideous and treacherous crime. What did that gifted demagogue care whether his reckless words stirred up rebellion in Africa, led to the defeat of British troops or the humiliation of the British Government, if only they might help to turn the tide of a general election? Mr. Gladstone's speeches and the efforts of the English Transvaal Committee convinced the Boers that their independence would be restored the moment the Liberal Party came into power, provided only they kept up the agitation with sufficient vigour. The expected change took place, and Mr. Gladstone announced that the Queen could not be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal. Worse still, nothing was done to fulfil the oft-repeated promise of free government. From that moment the Transvaal revolt was a certainty. The attempt to seize the waggon of a farmer

Mischief done by Mr. Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches.

called Bezuidenhout for refusing to pay his taxes only hastened its outbreak.

On December 15, 1880, the Republic was formally proclaimed at Paardekraal, now Krugersdorp, and the elected triumvirate, Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius, established themselves at Heidelberg, and from there on the 16th, Dingaan's Day, sent an ultimatum to Sir Owen Lanyon. On the same day an attack was made on the garrison of Potchefstroom. On December 20 the Boers laid an ambush at Bronkhorst Spruit for two companies of the 94th Regiment, under Colonel Anstruther, on their way from Lydenburg to Pretoria. At a carefully prepared point on the road Colonel Anstruther was told to halt, and the moment he had given his refusal to the messenger, a murderous volley was poured in on the troops from all sides. In a few minutes 56 men were killed and 101 wounded and the little force surrendered. Whether Bronkhorst Spruit was a justifiable attack or a treacherous massacre is a point on which opinions will always differ. There can be no difference of opinion with regard to the atrocious murder of Captain Elliot, one of the officers who surrendered on that occasion, who was sent across to the Free State on parole and shot by his guards while crossing the Vaal River. The loyalists and the small British garrisons were shut up in the villages, where they held their own till the conclusion of the war. Potchefstroom was the only exception, but in that case Commandant Cronje induced Colonel Winsloe's surrender by withholding the news of the armistice concluded with Sir Evelyn Wood—a doubtful piece of sharp practice. In the open country the large section of Boers who were against rebellion were left at the mercy of the revolutionists, and after the first victories the coercion was too strong to be resisted. Having isolated and invested the British garrisons the Boers now invaded Natal and seized and intrenched Laing's Nek, at which point they meant to dispute the advance of the small relieving force which was marching up from Maritzburg under Sir George Colley. On January 28 Colley, with 500 men of the 58th regiment and 70 mounted infantry, made a desperate attack on the 2000 Boers on the Nek. It was repulsed with

December 15, 1880. Outbreak of the Transvaal insurrection. Ambush at Bronkhorst Spruit.

British defeated at Laing's Nek and Ingogo.

the loss of 190 men. On February 8, while patrolling the road towards Newcastle with some 300 men, Colley was surrounded and attacked by a large force of Boers on Ingogo heights. After losing some 150 men he managed to escape back to Mount Prospect camp that night. On February 27 came the crowning disaster of Majuba Hill. Majuba is a flat topped mountain towering some 2000 feet over the western side of Laing's Nek. Colley conceived the idea of ascending it and thus turning the flank of the Boer position. With 554 men, selected from various regiments, the ascent was made on the night of the 26th. In the morning the Boers saw the force on Majuba and for a moment thought of abandoning their position. On second thoughts they determined to make a bold attempt to drive Colley off the hill. Less than 200 volunteers under General Nikolas Smit carried out the feat of actually storming the top of Majuba. Creeping up under cover of the steep hill-side they gradually worked their way up, shooting every man that exposed himself on the summit. No attempt had been made to occupy the lower slopes which commanded the approach, and the bayonet charge which might have saved the day at the last moment was never carried out. The British troops broke and rushed headlong down the hill. Sir G. Colley and 91 men were killed, 134 wounded and a number of prisoners taken. Of the Boers one man was killed outright and another died afterwards of his wounds. It was a splendid feat of arms on the part of the Boers. To Englishmen Majuba will always recall humiliating memories, not because of the actual defeat of half a battalion of infantry by a handful of Boers, but because of the abject surrender which followed. It has sometimes been asserted that in the present struggle Great Britain went to war in order to avenge Majuba. If by that is meant that Great Britain has crushed a small people to chastise it for having dared to fight gallantly, the assertion is untrue. But if what is meant is that the Imperial Government, at the eleventh hour, showed that it was ready to shrink from no sacrifice of blood and treasure in order to maintain its supremacy in South Africa, and to keep its faith with those who had relied on its

February 27, 1881. Battle of Majuba. Death of Sir G. Colley.

protection, then it is true that it has worthily avenged, or rather redeemed, the national disaster that followed so soon after Majuba.

Dismay of the Ministry.

The outbreak of the war created the greatest dismay in the minds of the Ministry—a dismay heightened by the succession of British reverses, by the news that the excitement in the Free State and Cape Colony was growing rapidly, and that a general rising of the Dutch all over South Africa was not impossible, and by the clamour of the peace party among its own supporters. Although Sir Evelyn Wood was now in command of a considerable force in Natal, and Sir Frederick Roberts was arriving in South Africa with additional reinforcements, the Ministry dreaded the prospect of a prolonged, costly, and unpopular war. It had already trifled with the idea of generously giving the misguided Boers an opportunity for submission. President Brand's offers of mediation, accompanied by no obscure hints of the possibility of the Free State's throwing its weight into the scale in case of refusal, were eagerly snatched at. On February 8 Lord Kimberley telegraphed to Brand that, if the Boers desisted from further armed opposition, all reasonable guarantees would be given as to their treatment after submission. After Ingogo the word submission disappears. On February 16 a telegram was sent to Sir Evelyn Wood telling him to inform Mr. Kruger that if the Boers desisted from armed opposition, Her Majesty's Government would consent to appoint Commissioners to develop a scheme of self-government, and would suspend hostilities. When the news of Majuba reached England, Mr. Gladstone, who at all times had a morbid horror of war, and to whom the idea of continuing a war for the sake of recovering lost prestige seemed too outrageous even to discuss, insisted that that reverse should not affect the course of negotiations already begun. It was a plausible argument, but the real charge against Mr. Gladstone is, not so much that he neglected the value of prestige, but that he did let Majuba affect the course of negotiations. The terms which the Boers secured after Majuba were not the terms the British Government was prepared to grant in the beginning of February. No amount of pompous pretence could

Armistice agreed upon, March 6.

disguise the fact that after Majuba the British Government sued for peace as the beaten party. On March 6 an eight days' truce was entered upon, and provisions were sent to the beleaguered garrisons. The truce was prolonged from day to day, and on March 21, after a series of meetings, Messrs. Kruger, Joubert, and Pretorius agreed to disperse their followers on condition that the independence of the Transvaal was recognised subject to the suzerainty of the Queen, the presence of a British Resident with considerable powers, and the reservation of foreign relations. The territory east of the 30th degree of longitude, viz., the districts of Utrecht, Wakkerstroom, Ermelo, Barberton and Lydenburg, and most of Zoutpansberg, which adjoined on powerful native tribes, were to be retained by Her Majesty's Government. When the mass of the Boers heard of this last clause, they declared they would fight sooner than accept it, and the Ministry, which had made up its mind to submit to anything sooner than face the prospect of war again, hastily dropped the question. To have adhered to it might have avoided all subsequent complications. The Commissioners sent to settle the affairs of the Transvaal, viz., Sir Hercules Robinson, the successor to Frere, whom the Government, yielding to the clamour of the Exeter Hall party, had recalled in disgrace, Sir H. de Villiers, and Sir Evelyn Wood, got through their sorry task as best they could, assisted by the advice of President Brand as the honest broker. As Mr. Gladstone was resolved on peace at any price, the Commissioners had on practically every point to give in to the demands of the Boers, but not till their ineffectual haggling and threatening had, as Mr. Fitzpatrick remarks in his 'Transvaal from Within,' robbed concessions of all appearance of grace and justice. On August 3 the Pretoria Convention was signed. The Suzerain Power reserved the right to march troops through the country in time of war, to control the Transvaal's foreign relations, and to appoint a Resident. The Resident was to exercise a general supervision over native affairs, and to be the channel of communication with foreign Powers. There were other provisions against slavery, securing freedom of trade, and general equality of treatment of foreigners en-

The Pretoria Convention signed, August 3.

tering the State. While the Convention was being signed the loyalists of Pretoria, followed by some of the native chiefs, took part in a strange funeral ceremony—the solemn burial of the British flag. On the lid of the coffin was inscribed the prophetic word "*resurgam*."

Disgraceful character of Mr. Gladstone's surrender.

The surrender of Mr. Gladstone's Government was marked by every circumstance which could render it discreditable. It was dictated by cowardice. When the revolution broke out, Mr. Gladstone had declared in the strongest language that the annexation could not be revoked and that the Queen's authority must be vindicated. When the Boers began to be successful and Mr. Gladstone found himself face to face with a difficult and expensive war, he capitulated abjectly. Nearly a million natives, who relied on promises made again and again that the annexation should never be revoked, were abandoned to their fate, in spite of the bitter protests of their chiefs. The loyalists were left to the tender mercies of their exultant neighbours or driven into exile. Their claims to compensation were derided as impudent attempts at extortion by "interested contractors and stock-jobbers." Their earnest appeals were met by disingenuous evasions and finally left unanswered. What they felt may be seen from an extract of the last letter addressed by Mr. White, president of the Transvaal loyalists' committee, to Mr. Gladstone:—

"Every care—even the most tender care—is being taken of those who have obtained by force of arms liberal concessions from the Government; but I am afraid very little care and very little sympathy is taken or shown for us, who have borne sorrow and suffering, and have done our duty against the common enemy, who buried all our political animosities when we saw English troops attacked, and who stood forward at the call of the imperial authorities to fight and some, alas! to die, for the maintenance of British supremacy. Whatever our faults may have been, however much we have erred otherwise, we ask you to give us credit for our loyalty. Some of us were deeply opposed to the autocratic system of imperial rule which prevailed in the Transvaal, and which helped, in the judgment of some of us, towards the war. . . . But when the sword was drawn, when it

The protests of the loyalists.

came to being an enemy or being loyal, we all of us came to the front, and strove to do our duty in full dependence on the pledged and, as we hoped, the inviolate word of England. And now it is very bitter for us to find we trusted in vain; that, notwithstanding our sufferings and privations, in which our wives and children had to bear their share; and that, notwithstanding our losses, including for many of us the irreparable loss of valuable lives, we are dealt with as clamorous claimants at arm's length, and told, as I was told by a member of the Government, we are 'too pronounced' in our views. If, sir, you had seen, as I have seen, promising young citizens of Pretoria dying of wounds received for their country, and if you had the painful duty, as I have had, of bringing to their friends at home the last mementoes of the departed; if you had seen the privations and discomforts which delicate women and children bore without murmuring for upwards of three months; if you had seen strong men crying like children at the cruel and undeserved desertion of England; if you had seen the long strings of half-desperate loyalists, shaking the dust off their feet as they left the country, which I saw on my way to Newcastle; and if you yourself had invested your all on the strength of the word of England, and now saw yourself in a fair way of being beggared by the acts of the country in whom you trusted, you would, sir, I think, be 'pronounced'; and England would ring with eloquent entreaties and threats which would compel a hearing. We, sir, are humble subjects of England, from the other side of the equator it is true, but none the less subjects, and perhaps the more entitled to consideration for that reason. We have no eloquence but the eloquence of our sufferings, of our losses, and our cruel desertion; but we urge our claims upon you as a matter of justice, of right, and of national morality; and we submit that if you do not listen to them you will incur the danger of offering a larger premium to rebellion than to loyalty; of alienating for ever the cordial respect of a number of loyal persons; of forfeiting all confidence in the national honour and justice; of utterly destroying the normal influence of England in South Africa—an influence which means more and is worth more than mere military prestige; and of handing down to posterity the name of your administration as one which was guilty of one of the greatest acts of national perfidy towards faithful subjects ever perpetrated."

The attempt to gloss over the surrender of British interests and the betrayal of British subjects by cant about the "magnanimity" of restoring a brave little nation to freedom, and the "bloodguiltiness" of continuing an unjust war, only puts Mr. Gladstone's action in a worse light. There were Englishmen who from the first had denounced the annexation as an unnecessary and unjustifiable act and had urged the immediate and unconditional restoration of the Republic to the full independence it had enjoyed before 1877. Such a policy might have had some claim to be considered magnanimous, and its effects would have been far less mischievous than those of the policy which actually was pursued. But it was not Mr. Gladstone's policy. Mr. Gladstone's policy was first to refuse, then to give in after defeat from fear of further defeat, and finally to haggle with the victors for the best terms that they might be disposed to grant to the vanquished. It was a policy of pusillanimity, not of magnanimity. To try and veil the disgrace of it by fine phrases was the most contemptible form of hypocrisy. The pretence imposed on nobody in South Africa, least of all on the Dutch. The effect such "magnanimity" had on the Boers themselves may be judged by General Joubert's well-known letter to Lobengula, a letter written six months after the signing of the Convention. In this letter one of the most progressive of the Boers and one who had good opportunity of judging the motives of Mr. Gladstone's Government thus sums up the situation:—

The cant of magnanimity.

"Now you must have heard that the English took away our country, the Transvaal, or, as they say, annexed it. We then talked nicely for four years and begged for our country. But no; when an Englishman once has your property in his hand, then he is like a monkey that has its hands full of pumpkin-seeds—if you don't beat him to death he will never let go—and then all our nice talk for four years did not help us at all. Then the English commenced to arrest us because we were dissatisfied, and that caused the shooting and fighting. Then the English first found that it would be better to give us back our country."

General Joubert's letter to Lobengula.

There was more truth in this brief summary than in the disingenuous explanations of the surrender made by Mr. Gladstone in Parliament. In the minds of the Englishmen in South Africa that surrender left a bitterness and a contempt of the Imperial Government which have hardly yet been effaced. When it has been said that the capitulation was pusillanimous, faithless, and dishonest it is only a natural consequence that it was impolitic. Its outcome has been feverish unrest in South Africa for eighteen years, culminating in a long and desperate struggle for supremacy between the Transvaal and the Imperial Government. If politicians are to be held responsible for the natural consequences of their actions, however long deferred, no small share of the guilt of the blood shed in the present war lies at Mr. Gladstone's door.

CHAPTER IV

PRESIDENT KRUGER'S POLICY

Attitude of the Boers.

THE Boers now believed that they had completely crushed and humiliated Great Britain. Their sentiments were well expressed in an address delivered by the Afrikander Bond at the National Festival at Paardekraal on December 13, 1881, which declared that "the Britons through fear had revived that sense of justice to which they could not be brought by petitions." So far from feeling any sense of gratitude for the "magnanimity" of the British Government, they resented the conditions imposed by the Pretoria Convention as an unwarrantable and impudent attempt to encroach upon their sovereign privileges. A deadlock might have resulted had not the British Government crawled down yet one step further, and suggested that at any rate the Convention might be ratified provisionally. The fact is that Mr. Gladstone dared not openly make any further concession for fear of seeing himself swept from power by a general outbreak of popular indignation in England. Accordingly the Convention was ratified provisionally in October, 1881. The terms of that ratification give a curious insight into the attitude of the insurgent Volksraad.

"The Volksraad is not satisfied with this Convention, and considers that the members of the Triumvirate performed a fervent act of love for the Fatherland when they upon their own responsibility signed such an unsatisfactory state document. . . . The English Government acknowledges indirectly that the difficulties raised by the Volksraad are neither fictitious nor unfounded, inasmuch as it desires from us the concession that we, the Volksraad, shall submit the Convention to a practical test. . . . Therefore is it that the Raad here unanimously resolves not to go into

further discussion of the Convention, and maintaining all objections to the Convention as made before the Royal Commission or stated in the Raad, and, for the purpose of showing to everybody that the love of peace and unity inspires it, for the time being, and provisionally submitting the articles of the Convention to a practical test, hereby complying with the request of the English Government contained in the telegram of the 13th October, 1881, proceeds to ratify the Convention."

Bad as the Pretoria Convention was it is not inconceivable that, if Mr. Gladstone's Government had insisted on a strict observance of its terms, and had kept an armed force on the borders of the Transvaal to ensure that observance, a reasonable *modus vivendi* might have been arrived at, and that the Transvaal burghers might have acquiesced contentedly in the wide measure of internal independence won by the prowess of their arms. But from the very first, Mr. Kruger and his followers were encouraged in the belief that they could supersede the provisions of the Convention, whether with the consent of the British Government or in open defiance of it. It was the conduct of the Government in the years immediately following the retrocession of the Transvaal, almost more than the retrocession itself, that inspired Mr. Kruger with the firm conviction that no Convention with Great Britain that restricted the full sovereignty of the Republic, need be final—a conviction on which his whole subsequent policy was based.

No attempt to enforce the Convention.

As a matter of fact, the conditions of the Pretoria Convention were mainly intended, by the British Government, to console the feelings of the British public at home. The Boers had not the slightest intention of paying any regard to them. Nor had the Government the slightest intention of venturing to enforce them. On this eminently satisfactory footing the Convention lasted two and a half years. In June, 1883, the Transvaal Government telegraphed to Lord Derby, Lord Kimberley's successor at the Colonial Office, that in the opinion of the Volksraad the time had come to reconsider the Convention. On the receipt of a reply to the effect that Her Majesty's Government would be pleased to consider any alteration of details that

might be suggested, a delegation was sent consisting of Messrs. Kruger, Smit and du Toit. On their arrival in London the delegates sent a letter to Lord Derby on November 14, declaring that their objection was not to any specific details of the Convention, but to the Convention in its entirety, that they must have an entirely new treaty, doing away with the suzerainty and the interference in foreign and native affairs, a treaty based on the recognition of the equal status of the two contracting parties. They enclosed a draft treaty embodying their ideas. This was asking a little too much. Lord Derby replied that the proposed treaty was "neither in form nor in substance such as Her Majesty's Government could adopt," and gave the delegates to understand clearly that there could be no question of withdrawing the Queen's suzerainty. Eventually, on February 27, the third anniversary of Majuba, a Convention was signed, in which the British Resident's supervision of native affairs, and the right to march troops across the country, dropped out, while the control of foreign affairs was reduced to the right of vetoing any treaty within six months. The Transvaal subsequently maintained that by the London Convention it recovered complete independence, and became a fully sovereign international state, subject only to a veto on its treaties. Such an interpretation is certainly not suggested by the text of the London Convention itself. The preamble of the Convention does not in any way define the relationship of the contracting parties, which must, therefore, be sought in the earlier Convention, which restored self-government to the Transvaal, subject to the suzerainty of the Queen. It simply states that "whereas the Government of the Transvaal State . . . have represented to the Queen that the Convention signed at Pretoria . . . contains certain provisions which are inconvenient . . . Her Majesty has been pleased to direct that the following articles of a new Convention shall be substituted for the articles embodied in the Convention of August, 1881." These words do not imply any alteration in the status of the Transvaal; in view of the request made for a treaty based on the recognition of the equal status of the two contracting powers, and

February 27, 1884: The London Convention —the suzerainty question.

of Lord Derby's express refusal, they might almost be said to positively deny any such alteration. The attempt to twist an admission of such an alteration out of the use of the title "South African Republic" would be ridiculous even if that designation were used throughout. As a matter of fact the preamble begins by speaking of the Transvaal State, and only towards the end, in giving the names of the signatories, it adds in a bracket "which shall hereinafter be called the South African Republic." As to the suzerainty, the British contention has been that the Convention of 1884 limited it very narrowly, but by no means did away with it altogether. In addition to the suppression of foreign relations it mentioned conditions dealing with the rights of aliens and of natives, the renunciation of slavery or apprenticeship, freedom of religion and most favoured nation treatment for British goods, conditions which, if disregarded, would give the Imperial Government a right to intervene. That Lord Derby should have drafted the preamble to the London Convention by the rather simple process of scratching out certain parts of the preamble to the Pretoria Convention and inserting others—a point of which much was afterwards made by Dr. Leyds*—proves nothing. The passages scratched out include the restoration of self-government as well as the reference to suzerainty.

Lord Derby's weakness.

At the same time it must be admitted that Lord Derby, with that fatal fondness for temporarily smoothing over difficulties by evading clear issues, which has often been characteristic of British policy, omitted all direct reference to suzerainty in the new Convention. Mr. Kruger kept on urging that he could not return and face his Volksraad with the odious word suzerainty in the preamble of the Convention, and Lord Derby thought there could be no harm in humouring an old farmer's whim by wording the Convention in such a form that the President might be able to "save his face" before the Volksraad, and explain away the real failure of his mission, which had been to secure the absolute independence of the Transvaal. Thus, while Mr. Gladstone's Ministry could satisfy Parliament that it had not

* Blue Book, C. 9507 of 1899.

given away the suzerainty of the Queen, the Transvaal delegates in their report to the Volksraad could declare that the new Convention was entirely bilateral, and made an end of the suzerainty. That declaration elicited no protest from the British Government. If there was any justification for the claim of the Transvaal to full sovereign independence, it certainly lay much more in the laches of the Imperial Government than in any recognition of that independence by the London Convention. The question has sometimes been asked, why did the British Government ever sign a second Convention at all? The answer is simply this, that the Boers and their friends in Cape Colony worried, and the Government, like the unjust judge in the parable, was eager to get rid of all worry and responsibility, and flattered itself that by so doing it would gain the lasting affection of those to whose clamour it conceded. It had neither the courage nor the desire to enforce the Pretoria Convention. At any moment some particularly gross violation of its provisions might lead to an agitation among the electorate to compel the Government to carry out its responsibilities. Sooner than disturb the peace of the Ministry, it was considered sound policy to give away inconvenient Imperial rights, which, after all, only concerned natives or British colonists who did not vote at the elections. The occasion was a very favourable one. Egypt, Ireland, the extension of the franchise absorbed the attention of the public and of the Press. And so the London Convention passed almost unnoticed. It is doubtful whether even the members of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry have more than the haziest notion of how the London Convention came to be signed. The moral effect of the concession of 1884 on the Boers was not very different from that of the surrender of 1881. Exactly one week after the Convention had been ratified by the delegates, with many pious utterances expressing their gratitude to Her Majesty's Government and their love of peace, the following declaration was made by du Toit, speaking on behalf and with the consent of his colleagues at a banquet at Amsterdam: "The South African flag shall yet wave from Table Bay to the Zambesi, be that end accomplished by blood or by ink. If blood it is

What induced the British Government to alter the Pretoria Convention?

to be, we shall not lack the men to spill it." The Convention was grudgingly ratified by the Volksraad as a small instalment of its rights.

Bechuanaland raided by the Boers.

The London Convention was no better observed than its predecessor had been. The boundaries imposed by the Pretoria Convention had been disregarded from the very first. Those fixed in 1884 fared no better. Ever since 1882 Bechuanaland had been infested by freebooters from the Transvaal, who, on the pretence of taking sides in the quarrels between the native chiefs, rapidly began to make themselves masters of the country. The London Convention divided the disturbed area between the Transvaal and Great Britain. No sooner was it signed than the incursions were renewed, under the leadership of prominent Boer officials. Mafeking was attacked, several Englishmen murdered under circumstances of the most disgraceful character, and two little Boer Republics, Goshen and Stellaland, were actually formed on the territory of the chiefs under British protection. On September 16, 1884, President Kruger formally declared these territories under Transvaal protection. But the insolence of the Transvaal was going too far even for the long-suffering British public. A reaction set in against the policy of perpetual concession. That reaction in English public opinion was largely due to the missionary John Mackenzie, who with untiring zeal and earnestness tried to instil into the British public some sense of its Imperial responsibility in South Africa, and to expose the true character of the Boer raids. In the Ministry he found a strong supporter in Mr. Chamberlain, who, though an advocate of retrocession in 1881, was already beginning to acquire a clearer insight into the problems of South African politics. In South Africa, Mr. Rhodes, who was just beginning to attain to political prominence, urged the Imperial Government and the High Commissioner not to let Bechuanaland, "the Suez Canal to Southern Central Africa," fall into the hands of a hostile state. An expedition was sent out under Sir Charles Warren, and at a cost of over a million and a half—probably almost as much as it would have cost to suppress the Transvaal rising in 1881—the country was reduced to order and the freebooters expelled. Bechuanaland,

Reaction in England. Mackenzie, Rhodes, and Chamberlain. The Warren Expedition, Jan., 1885.

COLONEL SIR W. OWEN LANYON, K.C.M.G.,
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1879--1881.
From Photo by Fradelle & Young.

COLONEL SIR GEORGE POMEROY COLLEY, K.C.S.I., C.B.,
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR S.E. AFRICA, 1880.
FELL AT MAJUBA, FEB. 27, 1881.
From Photo by Maull & Fox.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DERBY, P.C., K.G., G.C.M.G.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, 1882--1885.
Photo by Elliott & Fry.

SIR THEOPHILUS SHEPSTONE, K.C.M.G.,
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE TRANSVAAL, 1877--1879.

SIR JOHN HENDRIK BRAND, G.C.M.G.,
PRESIDENT OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE, 1863--1888.

and with it all that lay to the north, was saved for the British Empire. To Cecil Rhodes and John Mackenzie, men of very different character, and different political views on most questions, Great Britain owes in no small measure the retention of her position as the paramount power in South Africa. But for their efforts the Transvaal would have succeeded in carrying out its old ambition of drawing a barrier to the British advance right across the continent to the Atlantic, and of joining hands with Germany, whose annexation of the Damaraland Coast was undoubtedly influenced by the idea of getting into touch with the Boers and gradually developing a protectorate over them by playing on their hostility to Great Britain. The control of foreign relations contained in the Pretoria Convention had been perhaps the one thing most irksome to President Kruger's ambition. The signing of the London Convention was followed by a tour through Europe, where the first threads were spun of the web of those secret negotiations so diligently pursued for many years and so wholly ineffective in their final results. To get into close touch with some great European power, in order to secure a counter-weight against England, was Kruger's persistent endeavour from the moment the Transvaal was restored to independence. It was not an original policy. In pursuing it Kruger was only following the outlines of the policy already sketched out by Potgieter and Burgers. But he developed it with a determination and a craftiness entirely his own.

Effect of the Transvaal War on the rest of South Africa.

The Warren Expedition and the annexation of Bechuanaland met with the bitterest opposition from the Dutch party in Cape Colony, who had hoped that the expansion of the Transvaal would set a definite limit to British influence in South Africa. At this point it may be as well to go back a few years and examine the effects of the first Boer war and of Mr. Gladstone's surrender on the rest of South Africa. There had been, even prior to 1877, a certain academic nationalist movement in South Africa mainly confined to Hollanders or to young men who had been educated in Europe and been influenced by the ideas then in fashion on the subject of nationality and national rights. Among the

supporters of this movement the agitation against the Transvaal annexation found ready sympathy. But the movement was only wakened into real activity when the Boers rose in arms against the English Government and inflicted defeat after defeat upon British troops. The whole of Dutch South Africa was in a ferment of excitement. Volunteers flocked from every part of the Free State and Cape Colony to join the Boers at Laing's Nek. A general rising of the Dutch population to expel the English from South Africa for good and all was freely discussed. The proclamations of the Triumvirate, written by the Hollander Jorissen, appealed loudly to the Afrikander nation to arise and throw off the hated British yoke. "Freedom shall rise in South Africa like the sun from the morning clouds, as freedom rose in the United States of America. Then shall it be Africa for the Afrikander, from the Zambesi to Simon's Bay." These were the closing words of the Boer petition of rights addressed to President Brand on February 7, 1881, and the sentiment contained in them was widely echoed all over South Africa. The moral effect of Majuba, followed by the complete and abject surrender of the British Government, was tremendous. That the Transvaal Boers could not have offered a successful resistance to Sir F. Roberts, and that the general South African rising was merely talk which would never have been translated into action, mattered little. The Dutch felt that they had beaten the English army in the field and terrified England into surrender. There was a tremendous explosion of triumphant nationalist sentiment all over South Africa. Excitable politicians and journalists believed that the end of British rule in South Africa was almost at hand, that only a few years of agitation were required, and that then Great Britain, sooner than face a Transvaal rebellion on an infinitely larger scale, would surrender all South Africa, except perhaps the Cape Peninsula, to the United South African Republic. In the Free State an agitation was got up by Judge F. W. Reitz, scholar, poet, and Anglophobe, and by Carl Borckenhagen, a clever and ambitious German journalist, for the formation of a pan-Afrikander Bond, or League, whose object was to bring about the expulsion of

Explosion of triumphant nationalist sentiment. The Afrikander Bond.

British influence from South Africa and the formation of a United Republican South Africa under its own flag. The boycotting of the English language and of English traders, the arming of the Republics and of the Dutch in the colony, the pursuit of a common policy by which the Dutch in the colony should always throw their weight in the scale of the Republics in any dispute with Great Britain, were the principal measures by which the great end was to be secured. The Bond agitation was no less active in Cape Colony. One of its most violent promoters was the Rev. S. J. du Toit, editor of the *Patriot,* whose articles urging the formation of the Bond in 1882 have recently been translated and published as a pamphlet under the title, "The Birth of the Bond." A few sentences quoted from these articles will indicate the spirit abroad in Cape Colony in 1882.

Rev. S. J. du Toit and the *Patriot.*

"The Transvaal war is now happily over. And while we now sing praises to God for His deliverance and the victory of our brethren, and the restoration of pure and righteous Government . . . can we better employ our thoughts than by considering what we have already gained by the war and what we may yet further gain by it? . . .

"England's power has been repeatedly beaten and humbled. The little respect which an Afrikander still had for British troops and cannon is utterly done away. And England has learned so much respect for us Afrikanders that she will take care not to make war with us again. Think of it; no English soldier had the honour to set his foot on Transvaal ground. Those that were in the Transvaal already had to sit still in the forts like mice in a trap, and those that were to go and relieve them got their sound beating in the Natal territory.

"The Transvaalers have now got what they wanted, and what they for four years vainly solicited from England, namely, the revocation of the annexation, the giving back of their land, and the restoration of the South African Republic.

"The Free State shall now also remain a free State, and England must now keep her claws off from the Transvaal long enough for us Afrikanders to recover strength a little and pull things to rights.

"The Afrikanders have now a little time and opportunity to develop themselves as a people.

"The English sovereignty over South Africa has now gone back at least half a century. Good; heartily glad of it. . . .

"This is now our time to establish the Bond, while a national consciousness has been awakened through the Transvaal war. And the Bond must be our preparation for the future confederation of all the states and colonies of South Africa. The English Government keeps talking of a confederation under the British flag. That will never happen (*daar kom niks van nie*). We can assure them of that. We have often said it; there is just one hindrance to confederation, and that is the English flag. Let them take that away, and within a year the confederation under the free Afrikander flag would be established.

"But so long as the English flag remains here, the Afrikander Bond must be our confederation. And the British will after a while realise that Froude's advice is the best for them; they must just have Simon's Bay as a naval and military station on the road to India, and give over all the rest of South Africa to the Afrikanders." *

The English in South Africa were for the moment too dejected by the hopeless blundering of the British Government, too indignant at its vacillation and its callous indifference to its pledges, to make any protest against what was passing. But the Bond in its original shape was too extreme even for the more moderate men among the Dutch. President Brand had used all his influence on behalf of the Transvaal during the negotiations leading up to the Convention of 1881. He himself believed that the ultimate

Brand's opposition to the Bond in the Free State.

* The political career of the Rev. S. J. du Toit is not uninteresting and very characteristic of the movements and fluctuations of South African politics since 1881. Shortly after the formation of the Bond he went up to Pretoria, and on the strength of his undoubted ability and known enmity to England was made Minister of Education. He accompanied Kruger as a delegate to London in 1883. His speech at Amsterdam has already been referred to. On his return he was one of those most prominently concerned in the attempt to annex Bechuanaland. Returning to Cape Colony he was, till a few years ago, one of the principal leaders of the Bond. His feelings, like those of many of his colleagues, were gradually modified by the avowed hostility of President Kruger towards the colony and by the influence of Mr. Rhodes. When the Raid came and Mr. Hofmeyr broke with Mr. Rhodes and led the revived Afrikander agitation, du Toit refused to follow suit. Since then he has defended the cause of the Imperial Government as vigorously as he once attacked it.

destiny of South Africa was to become an independent confederation—an idea not unnatural in the days when even English statesmen believed that separation of the colonies from England would be the best fate for both parties. But Brand absolutely refused to lend any countenance to the Bond; he looked upon its propaganda in the Free State as a direct breach of the friendly relations he had always striven to preserve with the Imperial Government. In Cape Colony Rhodes had not yet risen to power, and there was no Dutch statesman in the commanding position of Brand. But there was a shrewd politician, Mr. J. H. Hofmeyr, who knew well enough that an openly disloyal agitation, based on no other groundwork than that of racial ambition, could not possibly succeed in gathering together the support necessary for a real national movement. Under his influence the official constitution of the Bond was modified in May, 1883, by the omission of all references to the Afrikander flag, and the Bond itself amalgamated with a body known as the Farmers' Association. It was thus brought on to constitutional lines and provided with a sound political basis in the social and economical interests of the land-owning classes. By its clever policy and by its admirably organised and unscrupulously worked political machinery, the Bond by slow degrees absorbed almost the whole of the Dutch inhabitants of the colony, and, in spite of the enormous English influx of the last ten years, commanded an actual majority in the Cape Assembly at the outbreak of the war. But it must not be supposed that either in the Free State or in the Cape Colony the extreme anti-British movement was promptly damped. Under Brand it had little political force, but it began to gain ground when, after his death in 1888, Reitz was elected president. Borckenhagen continued almost up to his death in 1898 to act as editor of the *Express* and high priest of militant and aggressive Afrikanderdom. He was Reitz's chosen confidant, and it was from him that the young Steyn imbibed his political creed and under his direction that he studied for the *rôle* of the first president of the united Republics of the Transvaal and Free State. In Cape Colony the new Bond for a while did not differ greatly from the old.

The Bond in Cape Colony constitutionalised by Mr. Hofmeyr.

The modification of the Bond only partial. Its endeavours to prevent the annexation of Bechuanaland.

The original members had not modified their views when they modified their official programme, and their influence was for some years predominant. In the Bechuanaland controversy the Bond used every means in its power to prevent the Imperial Government from annexing the territory of the invaded native chiefs and preserving the trade route to the interior for Cape Colony. It looked upon the Transvaal as the state to which it owed allegiance and the extension of whose territories it was bound to further against those of the hereditary enemy—the Imperial Government. It was not till about 1887 that the selfish exclusiveness of President Kruger and the personal influence of Mr. Rhodes created an estrangement between the Bond and the Transvaal and an open mindedness towards Englishmen and the Imperial Government which lasted till the Jameson Raid, and in some degree survived even up to the present war. It is interesting in this connexion to note that the manifesto of Bond policy, which is usually quoted by those who defend the Bond from the charge of anti-British aspirations, is a lecture delivered by one of its more moderate men, Mr. Theron, in 1887. But in 1884 the spirit animating the Bond could hardly be described as one of loyalty to the British Empire.

Mr. J. W. Leonard on the Bond policy.

In September, 1884, Mr. J. W. Leonard, speaking on the Bechuanaland question at a great meeting of loyalists in Cape Town, referred in the terms of the strongest denunciation to the disloyal alliance of the Bond with the Transvaal.

"Upon the outcome of this crisis depends the question whether the British flag is to fly in South Africa as the flag of South Africa or not. I challenge contradiction to that statement. I know that treason is rampant in the land; I know that disloyalty is promulgated in public meetings, in the press of this country, in the press of Cape Town. . . . I say their object was to degrade the British flag and to bring about a state of things when it would no longer fly in this country with honour to itself or for the protection of people living under it. This has been the object of some of the people of the Transvaal, and *per fas et nefas* to make this colony a hide bound dependency of the British Crown. Their object—that of the mass of the people; I do not say all of them—has been to aggrandise the Transvaal State. The object of

these intrigues was to cross our northern boundary, to take the land down to the Indian Ocean on the east, and down to the Kalahari on the west, in order that this portion of the British Empire might for ever be shut in, and destroy British sentiment, the object being that the Transvaal, by its powers of unlimited expansion, should become the paramount state in South Africa, and with them was to rest whether we should be graciously allowed to guard our coasts or whether that simple privilege should be denied us. That, I say, must have been the object apparent to every man who knew how to read public events as they occurred before him. That is the doctrine which has been promulgated by those colonists in the country, which has been promulgated in a portion of the press of Cape Town and elsewhere."

Mr. Merriman's denunciation of Bond disloyalty.

So, too, in 1885, Mr. J. X. Merriman, who, as one who was strongly opposed to the annexation of the Transvaal and has since become a leading and even extreme member of a Bond Ministry, cannot well be accused of aggressively imperialist prejudices.

"Now the situation is a grave one. It is not a question of localism; it is not a question of party politics, but it is a question whether the Cape Colony is to continue to be an integral part of the British Empire. The question is whether we intend to progress along the lines of freedom, of civilization, and respect for law and order, or whether we are ready to take the Transvaal for a model, and have our policy shaped by the Afrikander Bond. There is no begging the question.

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"Each one of you will have to make up his mind whether he is prepared to see this colony remain a part of the British Empire, which carries with it obligations as well as privileges, or whether he is prepared to obey the dictates of the Bond. From the very first time, some years ago, when the poison began to be distilled into the country, I felt that it must come to this—Was England or the Transvaal to be the paramount force in South Africa?

* * * * *

"From the time the Convention was signed the policy of the Transvaal was to push out bands of freebooters and to get them involved in quarrels with the natives. They wished to push their border over the land westwards, and realise the dream of President

Pretorius, which was that the Transvaal should stretch from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic.

* * * * *

"I could not agree with the Bond. It would make people have different sides and places, one colonist who was a Dutchman in opposition to another colonist who was an Englishman. Nothing could be more disastrous. Since then that institution has made a show of loyalty, while it stirred up disloyalty. Some people who should have known better were dragged into the toils under the idea that they could influence it for good; but the whole teaching of history went to show that when the conflict was between men of extreme views and moderate men, the violent section triumphed.

* * * * *

"What could they think of the objects of that Bond, when they found Judge Reitz advocating a Republic of South Africa under one flag?

* * * * *

"My quarrel with the Bond is that it stirs up race differences. Its main object is to make the South African Republic the paramount power in South Africa. That is the reason of its hostility to John Brand—John Brand, the Afrikander of Afrikanders."

So close in fact during this period were the links between President Kruger and the leaders of the extreme wing of the Bond in Cape Colony, that in the Transvaal men like Jorissen, Kruger's right hand man during the revolution, and Celliers, editor of the *Volksstem*, complained that the secret decisions of the Executive Council were better known at the Paarl, a thousand miles away, than in Pretoria.

Other attempts to overstep the boundaries imposed by the Convention. The Boers in Zululand, 1884. The New Republic.

President Kruger had been foiled in his attempt to overrun Bechuanaland. But his efforts to overstep the boundaries imposed by the Convention were not less active in other directions. In 1884 parties of Boers squatted in Northern Zululand and established a Republic called the New Republic, under the presidency of Lukas Meyer. In spite of the protests of Natal and of the Zulus themselves the British Government would probably have let the whole of Zululand be overrun by the Boers but for the rumours of an impending German annexation of St. Lucia Bay. This alarmed the Government, and what was still left of Zululand was

promptly annexed. On the Zululand side at any rate the Boers were now cut off from that access to the sea which they had aimed at from the earliest days of the Great Trek. In 1886 the British Government recognised the New Republic, and in 1887 consented to its union with the Transvaal. Foiled in Zululand, the Transvaal endeavoured to get down to the sea through Tongaland, but found itself thwarted by the attitude of Zambili, the Queen Regent, who in 1887 put herself under British suzerainty. The last avenue to the sea was cut off by Lord Rosebery in 1894 when he annexed the little patch of territory between Tongaland and the Portuguese frontier, belonging to the two petty chiefs, Zambaan and Umbigiza. In Swaziland the Boers were more successful. Traders and adventurers of every sort had extorted all manner of concessions from the drunken king Umbandine—grazing concessions, concessions for customs and revenues, for telegraphs, railways, gambling, etc. The Transvaal Government gradually bought up all the concessions necessary to make the administration of the country impossible without its consent. That the Imperial Government would not straightway thereupon recognise the right of the Transvaal to annex Swaziland, and that it refused to allow Umbandine to will away his country to the Boers, was always treated by the Boers as an intolerable grievance, notwithstanding the fact that they had, in 1884, solemnly guaranteed in no way to interfere with the independence of the Swazis. Even the settlement of 1890, which practically gave the administration of Swaziland into their hands, was resented by them as an outrage upon their liberty to annex any part of South Africa that pleased them. The troubles with native chiefs in the north of the Transvaal and the desire to keep the trekking instinct of the Boers concentrated on the eastern and south-eastern frontier made Kruger less inclined to encourage expansion to the north, though negotiations with Lobengula were begun as early as 1882. However, in 1887, Kruger sent an envoy to Bulawayo to arrange for the establishment of a Transvaal protectorate over the whole of Matabeleland. The envoy, Grobbelaar, was only just anticipated by the Rev. Mr. Moffat, who was sent up by

Tongaland and Zambaansland.

The Boers in Swaziland. The traffic in concessions. The will of Umbandine.

Boer schemes for the acquisition of Matabeleland frustrated by Mr. Rhodes.

Sir Hercules Robinson as a result of Mr. Rhodes' earnest representations. Later still came the "damping" of the famous Banyailand trek. Every one of these checks to the unlimited expansion of the Transvaal was regarded by President Kruger and his Boers as a grievance and an insult. The grievance was felt all the more because the Boers always looked upon every occasion on which their ambitions were only partially satisfied as concessions extorted from them by a weaker power, trading on the President's love of peace. From the British point of view, on the other hand, every one of these attempts to violate the frontiers laid down in 1884 was a further instance of the restless and aggressive character of the Republic.

Rapid impoverishment of the Transvaal. The concessions policy.

There were, however, natural and economic causes inherent in the Transvaal that normally would soon have brought an end to the burst of energy that followed on the success of the war of independence. The British administration had cleared off the debts of the Transvaal, had greatly improved the country, and crushed the surrounding native tribes. But the prosperity brought by British rule tended rapidly to fade away when the "back-veld" Boer was restored to power, with his irregularly paid, corrupt officialdom and his rooted aversion to paying taxes. For a while Kruger kept the Government on its feet by the sale of concessions and similar expedients. From the first he had declared himself a determined advocate of the concessions policy. As he explained in the Volksraad in 1884, concessions raised money without involving any taxation on "his people," and there was always the chance that the concessionaire might make a bad bargain and pay more than the concession was worth, or even come to grief. One may smile at the crudeness of the old farmer's political economy, but one must not overlook the political astuteness that lay behind it. As an opponent of direct taxation Kruger could always reckon on keeping his popularity with the real "back-veld" Boers, the men who could be relied on to vote straight through thick and thin regardless of their leader's policy, and if necessary back their votes with their rifles. Moveover, the concessions created a large class of men dependent on the President's favour.

The control and granting of concessions was an inexhaustible well of political power. Again and again, when the President had difficulties with the Volksraad, leading opponents were bought over by a share in some lucrative swindle. When the Uitlander immigration began Kruger believed that the policy of concessions would act as a check on immigration and prevent political agitation by keeping the alien population under the control of the men—chiefly Germans, Hollanders and Jews—to whom the concessions were granted. This argument is one that is set forth at length by Van Oordt in his defence of Kruger's policy. What would have become of the Transvaal if it had had to go on a few years more with the concessions policy, and no gold had been found, it is not easy to say. In 1885 the Transvaal Government was already in very hard straits. It was heavily overdrawn at the Standard Bank, which flatly refused to make any advances. It had to borrow small sums from private individuals to meet urgent current expenses. The reactionary policy and the financial mismanagement of Kruger and his clique had created a feeling of dissatisfaction which Kruger's leading opponent, Joubert, was vigorously exploiting. The ambitious hopes that followed the war of independence were already beginning to fail and things seemed to be drifting again towards the bankruptcy and chaos of 1876.

1886. The discovery of the Witwatersrand. The Transvaal becomes a wealthy state.

A few months later came the great discoveries of gold at Barberton and in the conglomerate reef of the Witwatersrand. Thousands of active, energetic foreigners streamed into the country. By 1887 the revenue had doubled itself, and from that time on the Boers were, without lifting a finger themselves, put in possession of a revenue quite unparalleled in the case of so small and primitive a people. Here then, so they reasoned, were the means to make the national dream a reality. For four years, during which the English ruled the land, prospectors had traversed the country in every direction, but had found nothing. It was only after their deliverance that the hidden wealth in the land was manifested. Assuredly the Lord had put this treasure into the hand of his chosen people to reward them for all they had undergone in fifty years of wandering and fighting, and to

give them a weapon wherewith to smite the Gentiles and drive them utterly from the land. The one conviction that the discovery of the gold mines impressed on the minds of Kruger and the leading men of the Transvaal was that the Almighty wished them to enrich themselves and to make the Transvaal the supreme power in South Africa. That new wealth meant new obligations, that the immigrant population had come to stay and would demand not only good government, but a share in the control of the state itself, that the whole character of the country would be profoundly modified by the ways and thoughts of these newcomers, were things that never occurred to their minds. To Kruger the "Uitlanders" were just labourers who had come on to "his land" to dig up for the benefit of himself and of "his people" the new treasure that had been found in it. He no more thought of granting them a voice in the government of the country than he would think of giving the Kaffirs that worked on his farms a share in his property or in the control of his personal expenditure. Not only had they in his eyes no conceivable right to consideration of any kind, but, what was more, they were enemies. Were they not mostly Englishmen, the same class of men as those Lydenburg miners who, in 1876, had been so eager for annexation? That their coming should alter the character or the policy of the state would have seemed to him a monstrous thing. By independence Kruger always understood the political predominance of himself and his faction. To have admitted a number of Englishmen to a share in the control of the state would, in his eyes, have been every whit as bad as annexation. According to Van Oordt, he already in 1886 declared his fear that the Uitlanders would go on increasing in numbers and demand rights of citizenship, and his resolve never to grant that demand. It was about this time that he replied to an address of welcome presented to him at Johannesburg, which had ventured to hint at certain necessary reforms, by a threat to call in his burghers against any thieves and vagabonds who should begin to talk about grievances. Still for some years to come Kruger had no real conception of the greatness of the danger that threatened his political

Kruger's attitude towards the Uitlanders.

ideal. The period succeeding the first great discovery of gold was one of hopeful ambition without, and genial reckless corruption within. It was only gradually, as friends outside were alienated one by one, as the ring fence of British territory was drawn closer round the Republic, as the growing Uitlander population was driven into irreconcilable hostility, and the burghers themselves divided, that the Kruger *régime* brought the Republic into that state of chaos and imminent revolution from which it was suddenly delivered, for a while, by Dr. Jameson's mad ride.

The main objects of Kruger's policy during the years that followed upon the discovery of the Witwatersrand were to render the Transvaal absolutely independent of all English influences, political, economical and social; to get rid of the last shred of subordinate relationship established by the Conventions; to increase the territories of the Transvaal on every side, more especially down towards the south-eastern coast of Africa; to secure the support of some great European power; and to make the Free State and Cape Colony dependencies of the Transvaal, without an influence on its policy, but bound to give it their support through thick and thin. The final purpose of all this was to place the Transvaal in the position of the paramount power in South Africa, and to enable it to dictate to the British Government on what terms, and for how long, it should be allowed to retain a footing in that part of the Continent. In its main outlines the policy was as old as the days of the voortrekkers, the men to whose generation the old President himself belonged. It was a policy the parts of which it was not altogether easy to reconcile with each other. The complete isolation from England, the attempt to divert all trade into channels absolutely free from British influence, the importation of Germans and Hollanders, and the exclusion of all Uitlanders, even Afrikander Uitlanders, from any share in the control of the state or the emoluments of administration, naturally tended to clash with the interests of the other states and colonies of South Africa, and to create estrangement between them and the Transvaal. The discovery of the goldfields evoked an enormous outburst of activity all over South Africa.

The main objects of Kruger's policy from 1887.

The Dutch in Cape Colony and the Free State welcomed with joy this great accession of wealth and power to the state with whose future their own political aspirations were so closely bound together. But they expected that some share, at least, in this great prosperity should come to themselves. They hoped to secure a market for their agricultural produce on the Rand, to gain some profit from the carriage of the vast importation of material and food-stuffs coming to the Transvaal from over-seas, and to find an outlet for the talents and ambitions of their educated sons in the task of creating the new administration called for by the growth of the Uitlander community. In this expectation they were disappointed. The young Afrikanders who went up to the Rand found themselves regarded with suspicion as being infected with English or Liberal ideas, and unceremoniously relegated to the same position of inferiority as mere Englishmen. All important and lucrative posts were given to the Hollanders and Germans. In commercial matters Kruger adhered rigidly to his policy of favouring Germany and Holland at the expense of South Africa. If he encouraged trade through Cape Colony, he might indeed benefit the colony, but he would at the same time be benefiting English commerce and strengthening England's hold on South Africa. And that he was determined to prevent by all means in his power. His ideal was to make Delagoa, or, better still, some independent Transvaal harbour on the south-east coast, the one port of entry for the interior of South Africa. To this port he hoped to attract a vast Continental trade, the surplus of which, after satisfying the Rand, should flow over the whole of South Africa along a railway system radiating from Pretoria in every direction. Pretoria should thus eventually become the commercial as well as the political capital of the country. The ideal was an impossible one. In spite of Kruger's desperate efforts, English trade through Cape Colony inundated the Transvaal. Everywhere the English population increased with phenomenal rapidity; English influence and the English language spread into every village of Afrikanderland. All Kruger gained was the hostility of the immigrant English element he might so easily have

The policy involved the estrangement of the Free State and Cape Colony.

conciliated, and the estrangement of the Dutch outside the Transvaal, on whose support his whole political system was based.

The policy of "everything for nothing."

Mr. Fitzpatrick has well remarked that "something for nothing" has been the motto of President Kruger's policy throughout. One might almost correct the phrase to "everything for nothing." Kruger wished to have the wealth of the Uitlanders at his disposal. But he refused to recognise their right to exercise even the slightest control over the way in which that wealth was spent. He used the taxes drawn from a mainly English population for the furtherance of schemes in which the hatred of all that was English was the one common fundamental motive. He considered that the whole Dutch population of South Africa was bound to be completely subservient to his policy. But at the same time he excluded it from all participation in the enormous material development of the Transvaal, for fear lest, by opening the door to it, he should also let in the taint of English influence. That in the end Kruger should have succeeded, for no return whatsoever, in inducing the Free State to throw in its lot with the Transvaal and sacrifice its independence, and in stirring up the Dutch in Cape Colony to make every effort on his behalf, short of a general rebellion, is a signal manifestation of his political acuteness and his still greater good fortune.

Kruger's railway policy. The Delagoa line.

Already, in 1884, Kruger, during his tour in Europe, had granted a concession for the carrying out of President Burgers' cherished scheme of a Delagoa Bay railway. But nothing was done till the discovery of the Rand made the prospect of good profits quite certain, when the Syndicate known as the Netherlands Railway was formed. The line was then begun in a leisurely fashion, so leisurely in fact that it was not till the middle of 1895 that it was completed to Pretoria. But if the Hollander Syndicate was leisurely, English miners on the Rand and English merchants in Cape Colony were eager and in a hurry. The Cape Government was now anxious to have its railway system extended to the Rand, and suggested the construction of a line from Kimberley to Johannesburg, via Bloemhof and Potchefstroom.

1887. Railway and Customs Union questions.

In March, 1887, Messrs. de Waal and Schermbrucker went up to Pretoria to press this matter, as well as the question of a Customs Union, which was strongly favoured by both the Cape and Free State Governments. Kruger would hear nothing of either proposal. To his mind both meant nothing more than a wholesale influx of English trade and English traders. In 1884 it is true Kruger had suggested this very line to the Cape Ministry, but his object then was a purely political one—to bring the Bond in Cape Colony into closer touch with Pretoria. The suggestion was scouted at the Cape as unpractical. There was no trade in 1884 which would have covered the working expenses of the railway. When the opportunity of trade was there, Kruger would have none of it. In his eyes railways were things that took the bread out of the mouth of the poor burgher who made an honest living by the hire of his ox-wagon. They were to be encouraged only when they subserved some important political end. In any case, if he should eventually allow a line to come to Pretoria from Cape Colony, he determined it should be the line across the Free State. Such a line would at any rate help to bring the Free State into closer dependence on its wealthier and more powerful neighbour. But for the present he had made up his mind that no railway should be built before the line from Delagoa was in proper working order. As for a Customs Union such a thing was altogether out of the question. Such a fixed compact was entirely outside the range of his comprehension. In the first place it would rob him of his freedom of action. Kruger would never have consented to tie himself down by an agreement which would have deprived him of the right of imposing a new duty whenever he felt so minded. Moreover, to his intensely suspicious nature the fear was ever present that the other parties in the Customs Union would use their control of the seaboard and of the up-country route to cheat him out of his fair share of the profits. And, lastly, accepting the Customs Union would have meant definitely consenting to the inclusion of the Transvaal in the British trade sphere.

In 1887 two secret conferences were held between Trans-

vaal and Free State delegations on the subjects which were then of all-engrossing interest to South Africa. At both of them Kruger was present, and nothing could give a clearer insight into his policy or into his attitude towards those from whom he expected such self-sacrificing support than a short account of the proceedings.

1887. The railway and closer union conferences with the Free State.

The first conference took place in President Kruger's house in Pretoria on May 31 and the next two days. There were present on the one side President Kruger with his State Secretary and State Attorney, Messrs. Bok and Leyds, and a commission of the Transvaal Volksraad, consisting of Messrs. F. Wolmarans, Klopper, Taljaard, Lombaard, and Spies; and on the other side a deputation from the Free State Volksraad, composed of Messrs. Fraser, Klynveld, and Myburgh. The Transvaal representatives are very typical. Above them all stands out the President, who practically leads the whole conference—knowing exactly what he wants, indifferent to argument, returning again and again to the same point, however often refuted; incapable of conviction, though ready as a last resort to lower his demands step by step and claim that he has made a great concession—the same Kruger as twelve years later at Bloemfontein, only here not on the defensive against a superior intellect and a will as strong as his own, but active, persuasive, impassioned, speaking among men more capable of submitting to his influence. At his side is Leyds, the smooth plausible young Hollander from Java—already then high in the President's esteem—taking no part in the debate, but making his influence discernible in almost every argument. The commission represents Kruger's stalwarts in the Volksraad, the men chosen for their unquestioning fidelity to the hand that has fed them and kept them in their places, for their narrow religious and political prejudices and for their genuine hatred of England. The leader of the Free State representatives is Mr. J. G. Fraser. Son of one of those Scotch Presbyterian clergymen who came out to South Africa in the middle of the century to supply the intellectual deficiencies of the Dutch Reformed Church, Mr. Fraser entered the Free State as a young man, and threw in his lot unreservedly with the

May. The conference in Kruger's house. Kruger in debate.

Mr. J. G. Fraser.

country of his adoption, rapidly attracting President Brand's attention and becoming his political right hand man, in which capacity he came on this occasion to Pretoria. After Brand's death Mr. Fraser resolutely continued the tradition of Brand's policy, but unfortunately, as year by year the influence of the extreme nationalist party led by Reitz and Borckenhagen, and afterwards by Steyn, prevailed, his own hold grew weaker. In vain Mr. Fraser for years prophesied the inevitable result of following the mischievous policy of the Transvaal. The mass of the burghers, swayed by sentiment and deluded by their belief in England's weakness, refused to heed his warnings.

Difference between the attitude of Kruger and the Free State.

The object with which the Free State deputies had come was a simple and straightforward one—to arrange for a general treaty of amity and commerce which should bring the two kindred states closer together, and more especially to come to some agreement with regard to the construction of a railway through the Free State to the Rand and to the project of a South African Customs Union.

Throughout the whole series of discussions at the conference the contrast between the attitude of Kruger and the Free State deputies is very striking. The latter have come to discuss in a straightforward matter-of-fact way certain economical matters of vital interest to both Republics. For Kruger and his commissioners these are all questions of high politics. On the railway question Kruger insists that the Free State shall not construct, or even sanction, its railway, or, at any rate, the part connecting Bloemfontein with Cape Colony, before the Delagoa Railway is completed. Delagoa Bay must be the port for the Free State, and not an English port which would let in English trade and bring English influences into the land. For in Kruger's eyes English trade is the worst form of ruin. It must be kept out of the Republics at all costs. To quote his own metaphorical language—"For the little sheep my door is open; but the wolf I mean to keep out." Or, as another member of his commission puts it—"What need have we of the colony and its importation? The trade they represent to us as life and prosperity is our death. We Republics are strong

"No railway connection with Cape Colony."

enough; let us go together." Against such arguments it is useless for the Free Staters to plead that the line is an urgent necessity for them, and that there is no sign of the Delagoa Railway being completed for years to come, or to ask whether the Transvaal is quite indifferent to Free State interests, as long as it can get the Free State under its control. Kruger entreats them to wait, vows that railways are a delusion and a snare, that for the present the Free State is much better without one. In time, he promises them, they shall have a great railway system radiating all over South Africa from Pretoria, but not before the Transvaal has made itself absolutely independent of English political influence and English trade.

"Delagoa is a life and death question for us. Help us! If you hook on to the colony you cut our throat. . . . How can our state exist without the Delagoa Railway? . . . Keep free! We shall help you, even with a contribution if necessary. I wish to share with you, but if you refuse, go! We shall build, if it takes us ten years. The Lord rules! If the Free State will not work with us, we shall make our own harbour on our own borders. . . . If you build your line I will not let it join mine."

"No Customs Union."

As for the Customs Union, Kruger declares that the Transvaal could never enter it unless it had its own harbour and was free of its dependence on the Convention. As things are the English will only use their position to swindle the Transvaal of its proper share in the receipts. He entreats the Free State to keep clear of such a union.

"No Customs Union! Customs Unions are made between equal states with equal access to harbours, but where one is master and the other dependent there can be no union. We are striving to settle the question of our own harbour peacefully."

Transvaal must acquire a harbour to be independent.

Mr. Fraser sceptically remarks that a harbour requires forts and ships and soldiers and sailors to man them, or else it would be at the mercy of the first passing gunboat. Kruger, somewhat nettled, replies that, once the Transvaal has a harbour, foreign Powers can intervene in its affairs. The Transvaal must get into touch with foreign Powers in view of eventualities.

"The strength of our position lies in our making the British Government understand that the Republics hold together. Then we can be sure that we will be taken into account. . . . Let us speak frankly. We are not going to be dependent on England. Take no railway union—remain without a railway. That is better than to take of their money. The future will provide greater blessings if you work with us. Let them keep their money. Let them not bind you. The Lord reigns—none other—the deliverance is near at hand."

So, too, Mr. F. Wolmarans:—

"We must look at the matter from the political standpoint of our independence. We have had much experience of her Majesty's Government, and we will and must shake ourselves free and become independent. We are still dissatisfied. We wish to get to the sea, more especially with an eye to future complications. Let us first get to the sea and achieve our independence. Wait a few years. Why are we to-day worried at Delagoa? English influence! They wish to keep us in bonds and dependence; that is what we struggle against. . . . You know our secret policy. We cannot treat the colony as we would treat you. The colony would destroy us. It is not the Dutch there that we are fighting against. Time shall show what we mean to do with them; for the present we must keep them off."

These extracts give some idea of the hopes and fears that animated President Kruger and his followers in 1887. They hardly suggest the theory, so common among those whose knowledge of South African affairs begins with New Year's Day, 1896, that Kruger bore no ill-will to England or the English before the bitter disillusionment of the Jameson Raid.

As a result of the conference, the Volksraad on June 3, in secret session, passed a resolution authorising the Government to make a secret treaty with the Free State by which each state should bind itself not to build railways to its frontiers without the consent of the other—the eastern and northern frontiers of the Transvaal being excepted. The railway from Pretoria to Bloemfontein was, however, to be proceeded with. Neither party was to enter into a Customs Union without consent of the other; the Transvaal was to

THE BOER DELEGATES, 1883-84.

Mr. Beelaerts van Blokland. General Nikolas Smit. Mr. Ewald Esselen.
President Kruger. Rev. S. J. Du Toit.

From a Photo by Elliott & Fry

pay the Free State £20,000 annually as compensation for loss incurred by not having the railway to Cape Colony. As consideration for all these remarkable favours, the Free State was to bind itself in an offensive and defensive alliance with the Transvaal. Such a treaty, which would simply have enslaved the Free State to the Transvaal, was promptly rejected by the Free State Volksraad. But Kruger was not to be defeated so easily. In October he came, accompanied by Leyds and another deputation, to meet President Brand at Bloemfontein, and a series of meetings took place between October 6 and October 22. At the very outset of the first meeting Kruger insists that all the negotiations must keep in view as their aim the "independence" of the South African Republic—it was no use discussing matters from any other standpoint. Kruger had come with the avowed intention not only of discussing railway and similar matters, but also of promoting a closer union between the Republics. Brand accordingly begins by suggesting a treaty of permanent friendship and free trade between the two Republics containing a number of practical and useful provisions. For Kruger, who was only thinking how he could get the rifles of the Free Staters at his disposal, Brand's sensible proposals were very insufficient, and on the next day—October 7—he replied by asserting that in view of the common enemy and the dangers threatening the Republics, an offensive and defensive alliance was an essential preliminary to any other form of closer union. Brand replied that, as far as the offensive was concerned, he would never be a party to attacking anybody's territory, and as for the defensive, where was the pressing danger or the common foe? The Free State was on excellent terms with all its neighbours. Nor would the Transvaal have any need for such an alliance if only its policy remained peaceful and cautious. Finding, however, that Kruger still pressed for some more definite bond between the two states than his own treaty, Brand went a step beyond Kruger himself, and suggested a Federal Union, of which he communicated a draft constitution on October 12.

October. The conference at Bloemfontein.

This constitution, mainly modelled on that of the United

Brand proposes a federal union.

States, gave into the hands of a President and a Federal Raad, composed of an equal number of members from each Republic, foreign relations, the power of peace and war, customs, coinage, power of raising federal taxes, promulgating federal commando laws, and constituting a Federal Supreme Court. Two-thirds of the Federal Raad, moreover, had the power of declaring inoperative any law of either of the Volksraads which it considered against the interests of the confederacy. The consent of Great Britain was to be obtained to a modification of the restrictions of the London Convention. It is difficult to say how far Brand was altogether serious or how far he wished to satisfy the closer-union section among his own burghers while at the same time putting a check to Kruger's machinations. There was nothing inherently absurd in such a scheme. The Transvaal and Free State were in those days much more alike and more equal in population and wealth than they have since become. Such a union would undoubtedly have had great results. Whether it would have remained separate or paved the way to a wider South African union is uncertain. What is certain is that the policy of the confederation would have been more liberal to the Uitlander and less ambitious of picking a quarrel with England. But federation would not only have damped the ambitions Kruger was resolved to translate into action, but would also have deprived himself, Paul Kruger, of the power he had wielded and was determined to wield for the future. Not Kruger, but Brand or some other moderate would be chosen Federal President. That Kruger saw at once. That was not what he wanted. Then, as ever after, he wanted the resources of the Free State to be at his disposal, but had no mind to let the Free State have a voice in directing his policy. He knew well enough that by an offensive and defensive alliance he could pursue his schemes unhindered and uncriticised, while at the same time he could at any critical moment always rely on national sentiment to keep the Free State to its treaty obligation. His attitude at the conference is an interesting one. He does not like openly to combat so fair-seeming a proposal for that closer union of which he has been making

The scheme distasteful to Kruger.

so much. He expresses warm approval, but hints difficulties and delays, suggests that it would take years to work out a constitution acceptable to both Volksraads. Provisionally, at any rate, it would be best to secure unity by the offensive and defensive alliance, or, if Brand objects strongly, by an alliance by which each state should be bound to defend the other's independence with all its might, and in less important internal or external troubles allow volunteers to go over the border and help its neighbour. It is worth noting that even in 1887 Kruger thought it desirable to secure external aid in order to suppress by force any movement, either of Uitlanders or his own Boers, which might be directed against his despotic Government. Brand declares that such an alliance is contrary to all rules of international law, that every state is supposed to manage its internal affairs by itself, and that one cannot ask the citizens of one state to do police duty or interfere in internal disputes in another. Besides, such a treaty might make the Free State a belligerent in a quarrel in which it had no idea of involving itself. The very furthest Brand will go is to conclude a treaty, to be in force till federation is accomplished, by which each state shall help the other with all its might if it thinks it unjustly attacked, but reserves to itself the right to decide whether it can help best by force of arms or by friendly mediation. Returning to his own scheme, he presents a draft treaty by which each state is to bind itself to try and get the federal constitution passed in its Volksraad within two years, and to use its best endeavours with her Majesty's Government to get the articles of the London Convention so modified that they need not affect the confederation. At this stage Kruger disingenuously asserts that his Volksraad has given him no power in the matter—in direct contradiction to his own previous statements, as Brand indignantly points out—and the subject drops. The result of the conference was that Kruger retired beaten, Brand having made it quite clear that he would not let the Free State be dragged into Kruger's policy or give up his power of independent action as regards either the railway or a Customs Union.

Failure of Kruger's negotiations.

Confiscation of the Delagoa Bay Railway.

Kruger's attempt to force the Free State to subject its interests to his railway policy, thus proved a failure. With his eastern neighbour, Portugal, he was more successful. The Portuguese Government had granted the concession for the railway from Lorenzo Marques to the Transvaal border to a Colonel McMurdo, an American citizen, who had formed a company, the shares of which were largely held in England. The prospect of having his only exit to the sea controlled by an English company was in the highest degree displeasing to President Kruger. Every conceivable device was used to bring pressure to bear on the Portuguese Government and on its representatives at Lorenzo Marques to violate the concession granted to McMurdo. Finally, in 1889, Kruger's object was attained by the sudden confiscation of the whole line by the Portuguese authorities under the pretence that the last section to the Transvaal border had not been completed in time. It required nearly a decade of arbitration proceedings to secure a partial compensation for the sufferers from this high-handed and unwarrantable seizure committed at Kruger's instigation.

The Free State enters into commercial and railway union with Cape Colony.

The Customs Union Conference met at Cape Town in December, 1887. The Transvaal, needless to say, was not represented. Negotiations were begun which ended in 1889 in a Customs Union between Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. The tariff was framed largely in the interests of the agricultural classes, and Natal, in which the importing interest predominated, abstained till 1899 from a union from which it could only hope to profit to any great extent if the Transvaal were included. The Free State railway was built to Bloemfontein, in spite of Kruger's objections, by the Cape Government. By the treaty of Potchefstroom in 1889 Kruger induced President Reitz not only to pledge the Free State to assist the Transvaal if unjustly attacked, but also to build no other railways besides the Colesberg-Bloemfontein line, except lines from Kimberley to Bloemfontein and Ladysmith to Harrismith, without the consent of the Transvaal. But so interminable were the delays in the construction of the Delagoa line, and so urgent the requirements of the mining population, which was several times brought near famine

1889. The Potchefstroom treaty.

point by the want of adequate transport, that Kruger at last was obliged to yield. In 1892 the railway was completed from Bloemfontein to Pretoria by agreement with the Netherlands railway. Three years later the Natal railway was also joined on to the Netherlands system. As any one could have predicted, Kruger's commercial policy proved a failure. British trade asserted its supremacy in the Transvaal in spite of every endeavour to exclude it. By his selfish exclusiveness and absolute disregard for any interests but those of his own particular scheme, Kruger provoked a feeling of profound resentment in the Free State and still more in Cape Colony against the Transvaal and its ambitious policy.

Mr. Rhodes. Colonial Imperialism.

The man who took advantage of that feeling was Mr. C. J. Rhodes. In a work of this character it would be superfluous to give more than a very brief description of the man who for so many years was with Kruger the central figure in South African politics, and who, in spite of his mistakes, still remains one of the most prominent men in the British Empire. Although a strong Imperialist, Mr. Rhodes was no believer in the Government of South Africa from Downing Street. His belief was in Imperial expansion through colonial expansion. His ideal was the creation of a united Realm of South Africa to match the United Dominion of Canada created by Sir John Macdonald. In all that concerned the local politics of Cape Colony, on questions of native labour, of taxation, of tariffs, his views were substantially the same as those of the Dutch farmers of Cape Colony. As early as 1884 we find him ready to confirm the titles of the raiders in Bechuanaland as long as they consented to recognise the British flag, to the great vexation of John Mackenzie, who, as a missionary, was indignant that the illegal and violent appropriation of native territory should be so lightly excused. It was a natural thing for Mr. Rhodes to co-operate with the Dutch, and Kruger's political shortsightedness gave him the opportunity he wanted. From 1887 onward, Rhodes worked to make himself the leader of the Afrikander party against Krugerism and for the benefit of the Empire. He endeavoured to create a colonial patriotism, to make the Dutch of Cape Colony feel

Rhodes wins over the Bond to support British expansion. Afrikander Imperialism.

that they were as good representatives of Afrikanderdom as the rude and unprogressive Doppers whom Kruger kept in power in the Transvaal, and that their colony, the senior state in South Africa, had as good a right to expansion as the Transvaal, and could make better use of it. He made them understand that if they wished to unite South Africa, they must, to quote his famous Kimberley speech in 1891, have all the cards in their own hands and be able to force the Republics to come in. It was thus that he persuaded the Bond to support that great expansion to the North which finally set a limit to the growth of the Transvaal and decided that Great Britain and not the Transvaal should be the leading power in South Africa. The Cape Afrikanders hoped that Matabeleland should afford their sons that outlet which they had hoped to find in the Transvaal, but which Kruger had closed to them for the benefit of European adventurers. To some extent the leading men of the Afrikander party became Imperialists. Mr. Hofmeyr rendered valuable services to the Empire in the negotiations with the Transvaal in 1890. He attended the intercolonial conference at Ottawa and openly came forward with a proposal for an Imperial Zollverein. Among the ablest of those who were Imperialists as well as members of the Afrikander party was Mr. W. P. Schreiner. But the reconciliation between Afrikanderdom and Imperialism was, it must be admitted, by no means complete. To a large extent it was only on the surface or confined to a few leading men. The doctrinaire pan-Afrikanders suspected the whole business and disapproved strongly of the action of their parliamentary leaders. Some time before the Raid Mr. Hofmeyr began to feel his influence over the party weakening through his support of Rhodes against Kruger. Nevertheless the Bond in 1895 was already very different from the Bond of 1882, and the process of development might, but for certain circumstances and for one disastrous event, have gradually continued. There was, and is, nothing in the objects of a rational and liberal Afrikanderdom in any way irreconcilable with the principles of British Imperialism.

The Imperial Government and the

To return to the more direct relations between the Transvaal and the Imperial Government during this period.

Transvaal. 1890. The Swaziland Convention.

The British public had by 1887 already begun to recover from the utter dejection and weariness of South African affairs which followed on the surrender of 1881. Lord Salisbury's Government was accordingly disposed to deal a little more firmly with Transvaal aggression than its predecessor. The treaties concluded by the Imperial Government with the Regent of Tongaland and with Lobengula have already been referred to. In 1890 a conference took place between the High Commissioner, Sir H. Loch, and President Kruger to decide a number of disputed questions, especially those relating to the Boer encroachments upon the independence of the Swazis. A convention was ratified in August by which, under a nominal condominium, the Transvaal practically took over the administration of Swaziland. The Transvaal further undertook to make no treaties with native chiefs to the north or north-west. In return for this it was to receive a plot of land on Kosi Bay in Tongaland, and the use of a strip of territory three miles wide across Swaziland and Tongaland for the purposes of a railway. This agreement was only to have effect if the Transvaal entered a Customs Union within three years. Kruger, with his usual determination to have everything for nothing, clung to his fiscal policy, but considered the subsequent withdrawal of the offer and the annexation of Zambaan's and Umbigiza's territories a monstrous act of injustice done to him. Other provisions of the convention were that the Transvaal should offer no opposition to the junction of the Natal railway with the Netherlands system, and that the Transvaal should assist the Chartered Company as much as possible. In the negotiations for this convention Sir H. Loch was assisted by Mr. Hofmeyr, much to the indignation of the extreme Afrikander party. Van Oordt denounces his conduct as highly unpatriotic. The Transvaal, as a matter of fact, got a great deal more by the convention than it had any right to expect. But the Volksraad loudly expressed its dissatisfaction with the terms of the convention, and no sooner was it ratified than the attempt was made to violate it. Under the auspices of General Joubert, Barend Vorster, and Adendorff, together with a number of those Cape Afri-

1891. Kruger "damps" the Banyailand trek.

kanders who resented the loyalist policy of Mr. Hofmeyr, a great trek was organised, whose object was to found a new Boer Republic in Banyailand. The invasion of Rhodesia was checked by the courage and resolution of Dr. Jameson, the administrator, who, with a small police force, held the drifts of the Limpopo. President Kruger had at no time openly encouraged the trek. When he saw that the Chartered Company was determined, and had the Imperial Government at its back, he resolved to climb down sooner than face the prospect of a war with Great Britain, and accordingly issued a proclamation "damping" the trek. The trekkers retorted with a declaration of rights, in which they declared that the occupation of the lands to the north of the Transvaal by a "foreign" government was monstrous and unconstitutional. To quote their own words, "the right to decide the policy and fate of the South African Continent belongs exclusively to the South African nation, and any assumption of that right is illegal, unconstitutional, and an insult to the natural freedom of the South African nation." But without Kruger's support the trekkers could do nothing, and the trek eventually dispersed, only a few accepting Rhodes' invitation to settle in the country under the rule of the Chartered Company. This was the last aggressive attempt at expansion on the part of the Transvaal. Kruger was now "shut up in a kraal," to use his own phrase, and his only hope of carrying out his policy lay in increasing his military resources, in strengthening himself by foreign alliances, and in recovering the influence he had lost in the Free State and Cape Colony, till he should be strong enough to reconquer by force from Great Britain the territories of which he considered himself unjustly robbed.

CHAPTER V

THE UITLANDER GRIEVANCES

From the earliest days of the immigration of the Boers into the country beyond the Vaal a foreign element had been associated with them. English hunters of big game and traders were among the first inhabitants of the Transvaal, and in some cases even preceded the "Voortrekkers." Their children, as a rule, became completely absorbed in the Boer population, but the survival of English names in otherwise purely Boer families is an indication of the presence of an original English element in the country. The Hollander, too, as has been noted in an earlier chapter, was no new feature of President Kruger's devising, but as old as Mynheer Ohrig, of Amsterdam, and Mynheer Smellekamp, the ambitious supercargo of the *Brazilia*. During the seventies the foreign element increased rapidly owing to the gold discoveries, and even before the annexation the larger villages were almost as much English as Dutch. A large district between Ermelo and the Swazi border became known as "New Scotland," and its chief village was styled "Robburnia" in honour of the poet Burns.* During the annexation the British element increased enormously. It is probable that at the time of Mr. Gladstone's surrender there was an actual majority of the white inhabitants of the Transvaal in favour of the maintenance of British rule. But as these were only loyal subjects who could be deserted without trouble or expense their wishes were not taken into consideration. The majority of those who were thus betrayed left the Transvaal when the Republic was restored. Of those

British and foreign elements in the Transvaal from the first.

* When the war of independence brought the anti-English reactionary party to power, Robburnia was rechristened New Amsterdam.

who remained, some in the fierceness of their indignation threw themselves into the arms of the Boers and have since distinguished themselves as among the very bitterest enemies of England. Others, unable to believe that the abandonment of the Transvaal could be the last word of British policy, went on waiting patiently in the spirit of the motto "*resurgam*" inscribed on the coffin of the flag they had buried in Pretoria.

Discovery of the Witwatersrand Reef, 1886.

For the first few years after the retrocession there was practically no immigration, but the opening of new goldfields at Barberton in 1885 and the discovery in 1886 of the banket reef of the Witwatersrand—the richest goldfield the world has ever known—brought an unprecedented rush of population into the Transvaal. From every part of the world, but above all from Great Britain and the British colonies, the foreigners, or "Uitlanders," streamed to the new city on the Rand, called Johannesburg after Johannes Rissik, the Surveyor-General of the Transvaal. Already in 1892 President Kruger gave as a reason for not granting any extension of the franchise to the Uitlanders the fact that they outnumbered the burghers. An estimate made in 1896 gave 25,000 as the number of fully enfranchised burghers, and 50,000 as the approximate number of adult male Uitlanders then resident in the Transvaal. There are no accurate figures, but it seems to have been generally accepted by Dutch and Uitlander authorities alike that the adult male white population of the State was in a proportion of about one-third Dutch and two-thirds Uitlander. The total figures, including women and children, would be somewhat more in favour of the Dutch, as many of the Uitlanders were unmarried or unaccompanied by their wives and children.

Permanent character of the Uitlander settlement.

These immigrants were not mere diggers and adventurers. The peculiar character of the Witwatersrand reef does not lend itself to individual digging for nuggets, but only to industrial development on a large scale. The Uitlanders soon showed every indication of becoming a permanent industrial population. The most complicated and expensive machinery was set up in the mines, and shafts were sunk

which required years of quarrying before they could even reach the deep level reef. Johannesburg rapidly became a large manufacturing and residential city. Nor were the Uitlanders confined to Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand. Pretoria, Heidelberg, Krugersdorp, Middelburg, Standerton, Barberton, and Pietersburg rapidly became Uitlander, in other words, English towns. The land itself, the surest evidence of permanent occupation, largely passed into English hands. In spite of the efforts of the Government to check this process, the Uitlanders before the outbreak of the war owned about two-fifths of the private land of the Transvaal. For this the burghers had been paid value to the amount of £6,112,718. The value of the land registered in the names of the burghers themselves was only estimated at £3,492,477. These figures, like others taken from the public records of the Transvaal, can only be accepted as approximately accurate.

Transformation of the country and its revenues

The advent of the Uitlanders, and the development which took place in consequence of the investment of their capital, energy, and intelligence into the country, completely modified the character of the Transvaal. Economically the poor squatter-state became a wealthy mining community. Politically the peasant democracy became a narrow oligarchy of wealthy landowners, carrying on its administration through a large bureaucracy mainly imported from abroad, and relying for its support on the rifles of the old democracy, rendered dependent and to a great extent pauperised by a regular system of doles and largesses. Side by side with this Boer patriciate and its Hollander and Boer clients lived the Uitlander *plebs* of the Transvaal, condemned to permanent political impotence. The revenue upon which the ruling oligarchy and its dependents subsisted was drawn entirely from this last section of the population. In 1886, the year of the great gold discovery, the revenue of the Transvaal was about £200,000. In 1899 it was over £4,000,000. The whole of the commerce, mining, and other active industries of the country have always, even before 1886, been in the hands of the Uitlanders. The Dutch population has taken no part in them. The difference between £200,000 and

£4,000,000 may, therefore, without injustice be taken as representing the contributions of the Uitlanders to the revenue. In other words, the Uitlander community contributed nineteen-twentieths of the revenue of the State.

Uitlanders brought as much wealth into country as they extracted from it.

The Boers and their sympathisers have always urged that the taxation of the Uitlander was only a small royalty which the Transvaal imposed upon its own property, which in its generosity it allowed the Uitlanders to remove from the country. Apart from the assumption that all the potential wealth of a country belongs in the ordinary proprietary sense to the class that holds political power, whether that class has any share in the creation of the wealth or not, this argument neglects the fact that the greater part of the wealth of which the Transvaal Government took its toll was not the gold brought out of the mines, but the capital brought into the country by the Uitlanders themselves. Individuals and individual companies may have made enormous profits; but, as a body, the Uitlander community took no more out of the Transvaal than the due return for the capital and energy it expended in the country.

Uitlanders in Transvaal by conventional right, not by favour.

On the general question of the rights of immigrant populations in new countries, there can, among Englishmen at any rate, be very little discussion. Immigration is a necessity for the development of new countries. And once the immigrant is settled in his new home he has a moral right to claim a voice in the political control of the country whose economic destiny he is shaping. It is by freely acknowledging the White Man's Birthright that the British Colonies and the United States of America have prospered and grown great. But the Uitlanders had even stronger claims than those possessed by ordinary immigrants in other countries. They were not in the Transvaal by the grace of the Boers, but by their own right—a right secured for them by the Sand River Convention, and by the Conventions of 1881 and 1884. In 1855 the provisions of the Sand River Convention were supplemented by an invitation to Europeans of good character to enter the country with full promise of protection. So again in 1883 Article XIV. of the Convention of London was anticipated by an invitation and

full promise of protection to persons desirous of working the mines of the Transvaal, issued by instruction of President Kruger and the Transvaal deputation and published in the London Press towards the end of December of that year. The Uitlanders have always claimed the right to enter the Transvaal, travel, reside, own land, and carry on their business without undue taxation or interference, and with assurance of full protection for their persons and their property. The British Government has consistently stipulated that this right for foreigners and British subjects should be a condition *sine qua non* of the self-government accorded to the Dutch Republic, and the Republic has consistently accepted the condition and accompanied it by formal invitation to settlers to take advantage of it. There is no room for misunderstanding on the point. The Uitlanders before the war were in the Transvaal by rights specially preserved to them and specially acknowledged in every charter of existence of the South African Republic. They were not strangers begging the hospitality of a foreign government.

Kruger's promise with regard to franchise.

Unfortunately, the terms of the Conventions, while guaranteeing full personal liberty and civil equality to foreigners in the Transvaal, neglected to make any definite stipulation about the right of the foreigner to political representation—the only means the latter could have of enforcing his right without the direct interference of the Imperial Government. Before the annexation of 1877 one year's residence, the payment of £25, and the taking of an oath of allegiance, were the only conditions for the acquisition of full burgher rights. At the preliminary discussions at Newcastle, in 1881, Kruger undertook that, subject to these conditions, no difference should be made as to burgher's rights between British subjects and burghers of the Transvaal. This often-quoted undertaking on the part of President Kruger will be found on page 25 of 'Blue-book, C—3219,' published in 1882. Notwithstanding anything which this promise may have been held to provide to the contrary, in 1882 a franchise law was passed which extended the term of required residence to five years.

Five years' term introduced. Acquiescence of British Government. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone's Government raised no objections. It is doubtful whether at that time anyone could have foreseen the importance which the question of the franchise was to assume subsequently. In 1882 there seemed no conceivable reason why anyone should want to become a burgher of the Transvaal. The majority of the British who stayed on after the retrocession had, in fact, taken special care to have their names inscribed in the British Resident's list of British subjects, in order to avoid being commandeered to fight for the Republic. Their action on that occasion was frequently used afterwards by President Kruger as a justification for refusing the franchise to the Uitlanders. Even after the discovery of the Witwatersrand the Uitlander community, as a whole, took no particular interest in the question of the franchise. It was only gradually that the impossibility of securing redress of their material and economic grievances created an agitation for the franchise—an agitation intensified by the resentment of the Uitlanders at the assumption of social, political, and racial superiority by the ignorant farmers who ruled them, and at the deliberate hostility of the Transvaal Government to the Empire, of which the majority of them were citizens. In the end it was these political and sentimental motives that inspired the Uitlanders more than the merely material ones. The franchise which had been sought for as a lever to secure internal reform gradually came to be looked upon as the badge of political freedom and equality, and as the only means of counteracting the insidious policy whose object was the expulsion of British influence from South Africa.

Material grievances of the Uitlander community.

For convenience of treatment it may, however, be well to deal first with the material and economic grievances which affected the prosperity of the mining industry, before giving an account of the political struggle between the Uitlander *plebs* and the Boer patriciate, which gradually developed out of the attempt to get rid of those grievances.

Given the existence of a rich mineral field in a naturally good climate, the first necessities for its successful development are cheap food, cheap labour, cheap mining materials, and cheap machinery; all these, if the field is situated at

any great distance from a civilized base, depend fundamentally upon cheap transport—hence, efficient transport comes to be the question of first importance. Johannesburg, which is a thousand miles from its most distant sea base at Cape Town, and upwards of four hundred miles from its nearest sea base at Delagoa Bay, formed no exception to the rule. In 1886, when the Witwatersrand was proclaimed as a public gold field, there were no railways in the Transvaal or the Free State. The Cape system, which afterwards became the Cape and Free State system, was pushing northwards, and Kimberley, De Aar, and Aliwal North were in railway communication with the sea. But from these points everything required for consumption in the Transvaal, including the heavy machinery needed for the working of quartz mines, had to be dragged by ox-waggon for several hundred miles across the veldt. As soon as the wealth of the Witwatersrand reefs was established beyond doubt, it became a matter of immediate necessity to establish cheaper and easier communication with the coast. President Kruger's attitude on the railway question in its relation to the foreign policy of the Transvaal has been dealt with in the preceding chapter. At the same time the ambition of the Transvaal to have a line of which the greatest length should lie within its own borders must be regarded as natural and legitimate. Delagoa Bay was the nearest and the best port on the coast. The future difference in cost of paying carriage over less than half the total distance in order to reach the sea, and the advantage of controlling the greater part of the line, were points decisive in its favour, and in principle there was nothing to be said against a railway from Delagoa Bay. The attempt to block every other approach to the Transvaal regardless of the interests of the mining community was quite another matter. A concession for the construction of the line to the Portuguese frontier had already been granted by the Transvaal Government. Nothing had been done by the concessionaire; but in 1887, when the value of the Johannesburg gold fields was established, a company, known as the Netherlands Railway Company, was formed in Amsterdam under the auspices of Dr. Leyds and

The question of railway communication.

1887. The formation of the Netherlands Railway.

Mr. Beelaerts van Blokland, then Transvaal agent in Holland, for the purpose of proceeding immediately to build the line under the terms of the concession. As a matter of fact, the terms of the concession were never complied with, and the line itself was not completed till 1895. In the meanwhile the company was allowed to build the lines leading from the Rand to Laing's Nek, and to Vereeniging on the Vaal, thus acquiring a monopoly of all the routes along which the Uitlander community could be supplied.

Position of the Netherlands Railway Company.

The capital and the interest on the loans of the company were guaranteed by the State—in other words by the Uitlanders, who contributed nineteen-twentieths of the State revenue, and no less a proportion of the revenue of the railway. The South African Republic also subscribed for nearly one-third of the original shares and subsequently took up the bulk of its large debenture issues. It is true that in return for this the Government received, or was supposed to receive, 85 per cent. of the profits of the company. But it was to have been reasonably expected that when the Government assumed financial responsibility it should also have had a fair share of the control by which financial responsibility is usually accompanied. The distribution of voting power provided for in the deed of trust, and arranged by Dr. Leyds, as legal administrator of the Government, with the Hollander agents of the company, was as follows:—Out of 2000 original shares, German subscribers, who took 819 shares, had 30 votes; Hollander subscribers, who took 581 shares, had 76 votes; the South African Republic, which took 600 shares, which guaranteed the principal and interest of the company's loans, and in whose territory the railway was to operate, had 6 votes. The arrangement was rendered the more objectionable by clause 17 in the Railway Agreement, under which the company acquired from the Government the right to collect and pass into its general revenue all Customs dues on goods imported *viâ* Delagoa Bay. A private company, of which the financial position was guaranteed by the credit of the Uitlanders, and on whose board of 112 votes the Government of the South African Republic retained only 6 votes, was thus placed in the

commanding position of a practically independent State Department, controlling the traffic rates, and collecting a considerable portion of the customs of the country. Moreover, it was enabled practically to dictate the relations of the Transvaal with the other governments of South Africa by measures such as the imposition of the preposterous charge of $8\frac{1}{2}d.$ per ton mile on goods coming from Cape Colony. It was a powerful political engine in the hands of Kruger and the Hollander clique over which not even the Volksraad had any direct control.

Railway construction scandals.

Still, so strange are the ways of new countries, and so much is of necessity tolerated in communities where all needs are marked "urgent," and there is no time to think things out to fine conclusions, that if the railway had served the public well it is possible that the extravagance of these terms would have been condoned. It was not so. The evils to be expected from such an arrangement were not long in disclosing themselves. It is enough for present purposes to quote the statements of Mr. Loveday, almost the only consistently honest and progressive member of the Volksraad, who made himself responsible for the public denunciation of what he characterized as the "swindling and robbery" to which the country was subjected. Hundreds of thousands of pounds, he said, were lost on the construction accounts; contracts were given for sections of the line at £23,000 a mile, which, in competent local opinion, might have been given at £8,000 or £9,000; close upon a thousand Hollanders were brought from Holland at the expense of the Republic to work for a few months on the line, and then sent back to Holland again at the expense of the State; stone for bridges was imported from Europe at enormous cost, when there was first-class building stone in the vicinity. Mr. Loveday also made himself the mouthpiece of public opinion with regard to the preposterous conditions of expropriation accepted by the Government. The Transvaal Government could acquire the line upon twelve months' notice, provided they paid twenty times the average dividend paid to shareholders during the past three years, and 1 per cent. for every year the concession would still have to run, up to January 1,

Terms of expropriation.

1915. It is obvious that such an expropriation clause, taken in conjunction with the extraordinary position of power of the company, would present, at the least, a very strong temptation to declare high dividends, based upon extortionate tariff charges, whenever this position should be assailed, and that it might be used to render expropriation practically impossible.

Extortionate charges and mismanagement.

The general charge of the Uitlanders against the railway was that it abused its position to make tariff charges greatly in excess of legitimate profits, that grave inconvenience was caused by the fact that the whole of its business was carried on in a language with which the majority of the Uitlanders were not acquainted—the whole of its staff of over 3,000 persons being composed of foreigners imported from Europe for political purposes—and that the incompetence of its management was such as frequently to delay the delivery of goods for months. The grounds of the complaint that the tariff charges were extortionate may be inferred from the fact that the net profit of the railway for 1895, the second full year of its working, was estimated at £1,500,000, a sum equal to the whole of the dividends paid by the mining industry which supported it. The capital invested in the mining industry was almost incalculable. The capital invested in the railway, and guaranteed by the Transvaal Government, was at that time something less than £7,000,000, the original share capital having been only £166,666. In the following year the gross revenue of the railway was £3,000,000, and it was stated by the management that the working expenses amounted to only 40 per cent. of the total. The price of fuel, which in a country where coal lies almost side by side with gold should have been very low, was raised in common with everything else by the extortionate rates of the railway and its refusal to afford loading facilities. The Johannesburg *Mining Journal* pointed out in 1896 that coal in the Transvaal paid 3*d.* per ton mile, or six times as much as the freight charged in Cape Colony.

The Cape railways contrasted.

In Cape Colony, where the system of State-owned railways is in force, upwards of 2000 miles of railway have been provided at a public expense of about £20,000,000. The railways return to the public exchequer every year a

profit averaging something over 5 per cent. upon this sum. Assuming, which there is no reason to doubt, that it could be possible for Transvaal railways to work on terms approximately the same as those of the Cape and Natal, and to content themselves for public purposes with a profit of from 5 to 8 per cent., £500,000 a year would have been more than enough net revenue to meet this requirement, and the saving to the Uitlanders, calculated on the basis of the railway takings of 1895, would already at that date have represented £1,000,000 of remitted taxation.

Absence of public control.

Apart from all scandals connected with the construction of the railway, all mismanagement, and all allegations of financial corruption and waste of public money, the net fact remains that, owing to the system under which the Netherlands Railway Company was created, the industrial community of the Transvaal suffered in respect of the first essential requirement of transport from the grave disadvantage that it paid fully twice as much as it need have paid for the carriage of goods and machinery. And though the railway was constructed with money raised upon Uitlander credit, there was neither Uitlander nor Government control to ensure that the bulk of the profits went into the Treasury to lessen taxation in other directions. To summarize the position in a sentence, the Netherlands Railway Company occupied in the Transvaal the position of a private corporation having the right, without any restraint, to impose unlimited public taxation. The anomaly was perceived by many of the Boers as well as by the Uitlanders. It was clearly recognised that foreign shareholders were allowed under this railway system to usurp the taxing rights of the burghers of the State, and memorials praying for expropriation were addressed to the President and to the Raad, but without effect. The President always affected to consider the railway a question of high politics, and denounced any criticism of its mismanagement or its failures to fulfil the terms of its concession as an attempt to undermine the independence of the State.

The Selati Railway.

The question of transport would be incompletely discussed if no allusion were made to what is known as the

Selati Railway scandal. This was a concession obtained in 1890 by Mr. Barend Vorster, a member of the first Volksraad. The Government agreed to guarantee at four per cent. the share capital and debentures of the Company. Nevertheless, concessionaires were allowed to account for £100 debentures at £70, and the difference between this price and the price paid by the public went into their pockets. The guarantee converted the funds of the Company practically into public money. The nature of the administration and of the control which was exercised over it may be inferred from a single instance. The Company arranged with a favoured contractor to build 200 miles of line at £9,600 per mile; the next day the same contract was sub-let at £7,002 per mile. Dr. Leyds was the official responsible under the Transvaal Government. While he remained in his position nothing was discovered; under his successor the scandal was exposed. The matter came before the High Court in 1894, and in the plea filed by the Selati Company the names were mentioned of persons to whom the Selati Company had paid sums of money or given shares and other presents in order to obtain the Selati contract. Among these names there were no fewer than twenty-one members of the First Volksraad, a body which numbers twenty-six members in all. The concessionaire being himself a member of the Volksraad, only four members remained who had not been paid for their vote. The list of names included the Vice-President, the son-in-law and private secretary of the President, the secretary of the Volksraad, and the minute keeper of the Executive Council. The Volksraad in its corporate capacity was presented with a portrait of the President.* When the exposure took place, Kruger, far from expressing indignation, placed on record his opinion that there was no harm in members of the Volksraad receiving presents. In connection with a somewhat similar exposure relating to a sale of stands in Johannesburg, the President went so far as to say that "in a country where there was no pension system officials should not be debarred from making a little profit." Interest in the case was recently renewed by the revival in Brussels of

* Reproduced in the present work.

Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger,

President of the South African Republic, 1883-1900

From the Painting in the Raadzaal at Pretoria

the prosecution against the Selati Company. Baron Oppenheim, one of the chief European concessionaires who stood behind Vorster, declared in his evidence that he had to spend £24,000 in presents, including a present of £4,000 to the President himself, and much larger sums in shares.

Uitlander impotence.

These two examples serve to illustrate two sides constantly present in their grievances, under which the Uitlanders found themselves to suffer. One side only was the actual material injury; the other, even more important, was the attitude of the governing powers in respect of that injury. This second aspect of the question receives further light from the action of President Kruger in the famous attempt to close the Vaal River drifts in the autumn of 1895. The history of those events belongs to a subsequent chapter, but it is worth noting that in the whole transaction, which so nearly concerned their own interests, the Uitlanders remained passive and powerless spectators. Kruger's high-handed conduct, although frustrated by the action of the Imperial Government, served among many other instances to convince them that no real redress could ever be obtained until they themselves had influence in the government of the country. In all this nothing was more bitter to the Uitlanders than the sense, of which the realization became more acute with every passing year, that the actions of the Transvaal Government were taken as the result of a fixed policy of hatred to Great Britain, and represented a deliberately hostile intention to evade the provisions of the Conventions intended to secure equal rights for white men, and to reduce British subjects in the Transvaal to a position of inferiority which it was not possible to continue to occupy without the loss of self-respect.

Hostile tariffs. Cost of living in the Transvaal.

The question of transport has been dealt with in detail for the double reason that it was the real cause of many other material grievances, and that it serves to illustrate the character of the administration with which the Uitlanders found themselves face to face. The cost of carriage, due to extortionate rates and maladministration, added, of course, enormously to the cost of machinery, to the cost of fuel, and to the cost of food.

This was further increased by an ingeniously devised system of levying heavy Customs duties on all objects consumed by the Uitlander community. Maize, meat, flour, meal, bacon, ham, forage, pigs, cattle, sheep, were made subject to hostile tariffs. All these are largely required for the food of white and native labourers employed upon the mines, and are not produced in sufficient quantity in the country. The cost of living was so great that, in spite of the high wages to be earned on the Rand, married men among the white workmen were in many instances unable to keep their families with them. It pressed as a heavy grievance upon the working population, and added materially to the price of white labour. In this, as in the case of transport, the Government was openly and avowedly hostile to the interests of the Uitlanders, and it became evident that no redress could be obtained until some form of political control could be established over the Government.

Native labour and the liquor traffic.

The cost of native labour, which is very largely employed upon the mines, was much increased by the policy adopted by the Transvaal Government towards the natives. This is not the place in which to attempt to enter into the merits of a very complicated question, but it may be said that the lack of proper protection, the harassments and extortions from officials and others to which natives were subjected on their way to the mines, and the absence of facilities for the introduction of natives from outside or for their journey to the Rand, were held by the Uitlanders to be the main cause of a difficulty in obtaining native labour, which forced up the price of that labour from £2 2*s.* to £3 3*s.* a month, while in other South African states wages for natives rule from 15*s.* to 30*s.* a month. Leading Uitlanders have estimated that this excessive price for labour, which, it should be remembered, represented no gain to the native but only a partial compensation for danger and discomfort endured, was before the outbreak of the war equivalent to an extra imposition of at least £1,200,000 on the mining industry. But this extra cost in wages was as nothing to the expense entailed and the evil done in the first instance by bad liquor laws, and latterly by the maladministration of the

reformed laws. One of the first concessions granted after the retrocession of the country in 1881 was a liquor monopoly. The factory established under it, within a few miles of Pretoria, had the sole right to distil liquor in the country. The liquor produced was not liked by white people, and a very prosperous business was based almost entirely on the sale of liquor to natives. German liquor of low quality was also imported for the same purpose. All experience in dealing with natives is agreed upon this one point, that intoxicating liquors must be kept from them. But in Johannesburg the granting of licenses to liquor houses was carried to such an extreme that at last the whole community rose against the scandal. Natives were allowed to obtain liquor freely. They were perpetually drunk, and riot and crime were common among them upon the mines. A proportion of the labourers, estimated as fully 10 per cent., employed were continually incapable of work, and it was stated by some of the company managers that they lost by drunkenness 25 per cent. of the labour for which they paid.

The illicit liquor trade.

Labour and liquor laws are in all countries difficult questions. In the Transvaal, where they are complicated by the employment of native labour, it was especially necessary that employers of labour should have some means of giving effect to their influence and opinion, and that they should work in harmony with the Government. But in these as in other questions the Uitlanders found themselves in helpless opposition to the views prevailing in official circles. The Chamber of Mines made representations for years without effect. When at last the scandal grew too great to be endured, and reform was obtained in the laws, the maladministration was such that the evil went on almost unchecked. The police were throughout on terms of the closest alliance with the heads of the illicit traffic, who were never touched even if some wretched hawker was occasionally fined to satisfy the importunity of mine managers. Mr. Esselen's attempt in 1895, when State Attorney, to deal with the mischief only led to his expulsion from office. It required British occupation to put a stop to

Ineffectual protests. Police corruption.

the abuse. Within a month of the surrender of Johannesburg one of the heads of the Illicit Liquor ring, a certain Joffe, known on the Rand as the Liquor King, was sentenced to a heavy fine and several years' imprisonment, with the result that the whole trade was paralysed. The Illicit Gold traffic, *i.e.* the trade in gold stolen from the companies, was another scandal with which the police, possibly for good reasons, made no attempt to cope. The Industrial Commission in 1897 considered that the industry lost by this item alone fully ten per cent. of the total annual output, or about £750,000 a year. The material loss suffered under the Republic by the mining industry, as a result of inefficient labour, liquor and gold theft laws, is probably underestimated when it is put at £2,000,000 a year.

The dynamite monopoly. Terms of the 1887 concession.

Almost as great a grievance as the Netherlands Railway monopoly was the dynamite monopoly. Dynamite is used in enormous quantities in mining quartz reef. On the quantity used by the Witwatersrand mines alone it has been calculated that the difference between the price that was paid and the price that might have been paid amounted to fully £600,000 a year. In this case, even more than in that of the Netherlands Railway, what the mining industry resented was that the money thus extorted from them went almost entirely into the pockets of private speculators and concessionaires, instead of going to the public exchequer in the form of indirect taxation. In 1887 Mr. Lippert, a German, obtained a concession from Kruger for the sole manufacture and sale of dynamite and other explosives in the Transvaal, which concession he in his turn made over to a French company, in which, however, he retained a leading interest. The conditions of the concession were that the explosives were to be manufactured in the Transvaal, and that only such raw materials as could not be found in the Transvaal at all were to be imported. All importation of explosives into the Transvaal was prohibited. The maximum price to be charged was fixed at £7 10*s.* per case of 50 lbs., on which the Government was to receive a royalty of 2*s.* The company also paid the Government £3,750 a year for the Government powder factory which it took over.

There was no attempt to fulfil the terms of the concession. No factory was built and no dynamite manufactured. All that the company did was, under the pretence of importing raw materials, to import dynamite duty free and to pocket the difference between their monopoly price of £7 10*s.* and the European price, which at one time was as low as 21*s.* 6*d.* f.o.b. at Hamburg, and even since the formation of the Nobel ring has ruled at an average of 30*s.* to 35*s.** After allowing for all costs of importation and shipping, the company thus made a profit of from 300 to 400 per cent. The free importation, it need hardly be said, of an article by one set of persons which was forbidden to others was in contravention of the provisions of the London Convention. In 1892 the swindle was exposed, and Kruger was obliged, nominally at least, to cancel the concession. He, however, insisted that the Volksraad should reserve to the Government the monopoly of the manufacture and sale of explosives, with the right to transfer the monopoly to an agent. This was all Kruger wanted, and a few months later, in October 1893, Mr. L. G. Vorstmann, a partner of the former concessionaire, was appointed sole agent for fifteen years. In other words, the dynamite scandal was renewed with the seal of official approval. The maximum price of dynamite was fixed at £5 per case. The Government was to receive 5*s.* per case royalty and 20 per cent. of the surplus which remained after deducting costs and 8 per cent. interest on the capital. The agent was bound to erect a factory within two and a half years, a provision which was not complied with. By hard fighting the mining industry obtained a reserved right to import dynamite under certain circumstances by special permit on payment of a duty of 37*s.* 6*d.* per case. Shortly afterwards, the French company of which Vorstmann was the representative amalgamated with Nobels, and the price came down to 85*s.* In 1898, as a result of constant agitation and of an official inquiry, a further slight reduction was made, the company foregoing 5*s.* per case and the Government foregoing its 5*s.* royalty.

The importation swindle. Cancellation and re-transfer of the monopoly.

Whether or not this second dynamite concession was in

* For convenience of comparison, the prices quoted are those of No. 1 dynamite, the kind chiefly used in mining.

Kruger's support of the dynamite concession.

conflict with the terms of the London Convention is a question belonging more properly to a subsequent chapter. What is most striking about the dynamite concession in its political aspect is that it was the one scandal of the Kruger *régime* which the friends of the Transvaal found hardest to swallow. Again and again the Volksraad attempted to get rid of the concession. On every occasion the President stepped into the breach in its defence, vowing that the independence of the State was bound up with the monopoly, and threatening his resignation if adverse resolutions were passed. In the summer of 1899 it seemed at one moment as if the Volksraad were really going to make an end to the scandal. But somehow or other the President succeeded in coercing the Raad into acquiescence, in spite of what at one time seemed an overwhelming majority against the concession, and in spite of the appeals from the leaders of the Afrikander Party in Cape Colony and the Free State. On July 7 Mr. Hofmeyr, telegraphing to Mr. Fischer at Bloemfontein, urged him to insist with President Kruger on instant cancellation of the dynamite concession. President Steyn even tried to make its cancellation a condition of his support, and when the Volksraad in August decided to renew the contract with the concessionaires his annoyance was so great that Mr. Wolmarans had to be sent specially from Pretoria to smooth him down and to explain how essential the concession was to the maintenance of republican independence. Why President Kruger defended with such desperate persistence the interests of the dynamite company is a matter on which it is impossible at present to give a definite judgment. But it is possible that the commission now sitting at Cape Town to inquire into the whole subject of concessions may throw some light into this peculiarly unsavoury corner of Transvaal corruption.

Other concessions.

The railway, liquor, and dynamite concessions are but three instances of a system which had eaten into the whole mercantile life of the community. The following are some of the principal articles for the trade in which exclusive preferential or privileged rights were granted:—iron, sugar, wool, bricks, earthenware, paper, candles, soap, calcium car-

bide, oil, matches, cocoa, bottles, jam. All these figured as concessions on the latest official list published before the war.

But the instances already detailed suffice to show that in the three points alone of transport, labour, and mining stuffs the Uitlander community suffered, in consequence of what they believed to be incompetent and dishonest administration, direct material loss of fully £3,000,000 a year. This is without counting indirect loss from the incidence of the Customs tariff and its effect upon the price of white labour. The net profits of the industry as represented by the dividends distributed in 1895 amounted to £1,500,000.* The material side of the Uitlanders' grievances may, therefore, be summed up by the statement that they found themselves subjected to a totally unnecessary and, as they believed, dishonestly imposed burden amounting to fully double the profits of a large and in all other respects prosperous industry. Apply such a condition of affairs to the cotton industry of Manchester, the silk industry of Lyons, or any other large industry in any other country in the world, and the wonder will rather be that the situation lasted as long as it did than that it came to an end so soon.

The burden on the Uitlander.

The further indirect loss caused by vexatious restriction was incalculable. The attitude of the Government in this respect may be inferred from a speech made by President Kruger in the second Raad on the occasion of a proposal to proclaim the town lands of Pretoria as a goldfield. "Stop," he said, "and think what you are doing before you throw fresh fields open. Look at Johannesburg! See what a trouble and expense it is to us. We have enough gold and enough gold-seekers in the country already. For all you know there may be another Witwatersrand at your very feet."

Kruger's hostile attitude.

The advocates of the Transvaal Government have often claimed that taxation in the Republic was not heavy. It was heavy enough to increase the revenue in ten years from £200,000 to £4,000,000. The Uitlander community, numbering perhaps 200,000 persons, admittedly paid almost the whole of it. In other words, the Uitlanders paid about £20

Incidence of taxation.

* On an output of £8,569,555. The output for 1899 was approximately £15,000,000.

a head in taxation as against £2 10*s.* a head paid by the British taxpayer for the up-keeping of an Empire. Or, to take the case of a new country, which offers a fairer parallel, the Uitlanders paid about four times as much a head as the white population of Australia. The Uitlanders did not complain of the amount of the taxation levied upon them, but serious grievances were felt in respect of the manner in which taxes were imposed, and still more of the manner in which the money taken was squandered. To be subject to taxation without representation represents a wrong to the mind of the Englishman wherever he finds himself. In the Transvaal he was willing to pay for administration, but he asked that in return he should receive what he paid for. His demand was vain. There was hardly a point of civilised administration in which Transvaal methods could satisfy even moderate requirements of efficiency. The Uitlander community, powerless to prevent the squandering of public money, was equally powerless to prevent the imposition of unnecessary new taxes. Checks provided by the constitution against hasty legislation were ignored. As time went on it became apparent that there was no effectual limitation to the taxing rapacity of the Boer Government. A resolution to impose a tax of 5 per cent. upon mining profits, which was introduced into the Volksraad, debated and adopted in one morning without warning to investors, and without opportunity given for protest, may be taken as an indication of how far the rights of arbitrary taxation might be carried. A war tax of £20 per farm, levied in such a manner as to fall only on land held by Uitlanders, was an instance of the ingenuity with which the provisions of the Convention for equal taxation of Uitlander and Burgher could be evaded.

Military expenditure. 1893–98.

While, as the tax-paying portion of the community, the Uitlanders had reason to complain that those things for which they paid were not given to them, they had also reason to complain that they were made to pay for things which they did not want, and for still other things which they were not allowed to know. The military expenditure of the State, of which the Uitlanders entirely disapproved, grew

year by year. Side by side with it, and in fact forming part of it, though under the name of public works, the construction of new forts in the vicinity of Pretoria and Johannesburg was carried on, and on every Budget large sums, otherwise unaccounted for, were entered under the general headings of "special payments" and "sundry services." These items of expenditure on military, public works, and secret service, taken together, rose gradually from £500,000 in 1893 to £1,250,000 in 1898.

Official salaries. Remuneration of judges.

The fixed salary lists of the Transvaal amounted in the last year before the war to no less a sum than £1,203,027, divided among 5497 officials (exclusive of 3283 on the Netherlands Railway). In a country of which the total number of fully enfranchised burghers was well under 30,000, one burgher in every five was an official—a fact which may help to explain the extraordinary power exercised by the President, who had the dispensation of office in his hands, and the reluctance of the majority of the burghers to throw open their lucrative preserve by the extension of the franchise. Yet President Kruger did not hesitate to allege as a reason for winking at irregularities committed by Government officials that in a country with no pension list they should be allowed to supplement their incomes by making a little profit. Nothing is more important in the distribution of public salaries than that the salaries of judges should be adequate and fixed. In the Transvaal they were neither. They were liable to alteration practically at the will of the Executive, and at a time when puisne judges were receiving only £2,000 a year they were expected to pay their own circuit expenses. In Great Britain, where we are content to spend £2,250,000 on a Civil Service which has the reputation of being the most efficient in the world, we spend about £5,000,000 on "Law and Justice." In the Transvaal, while the fixed salary list reached the total which has been named, the sum allotted to the Administration of Justice fluctuated between £30,000 and £80,000. Under the circumstances, and considering the temptations to which they were exposed, it must be put to the credit of the Transvaal judges that miscarriage of justice was not more often due to their decisions.

Social and personal grievances of the Uitlanders. Suppression of the English language.

But seriously as the material grievances pressed upon the Uitlander community the social and personal grievances were even more keenly felt. The majority of the Uitlanders were British subjects who had grown to manhood, either in the United Kingdom or in the British colonies, under self-governing institutions. Their habits and inclinations had been formed in the exercise of freedom. In the Transvaal they found themselves subject to a hostile, incompetent, and dishonest Government, acting absolutely without reference to their interests, their convenience, or their sentiments. They had practically no voice in their municipal affairs. They were burdened with a police which was incompetent, corrupt, and, as a rule, unable to talk English. Yet one such policeman had the right to disperse any gathering of more than seven persons if, in his opinion, it was desirable! Trial by jury was a farce, considering that only burghers were admitted to sit on juries. The English language was tabooed in the Law Courts, and all the litigation of a large community overwhelmingly English in its composition was carried on in Dutch. The attitude of the Government towards education was one of the worst abuses of the whole Kruger system. In 1895 the sum allotted to education out of general revenue, *i.e.* out of the pockets of the Uitlanders, amounted to £63,000. Of this only £650 were spent on schools for Uitlander children. Later, when the amount was increased to over £200,000, and more facilities given to the Uitlander community, the one object of the Government and its Hollander superintendent-general of education, Dr. Mansvelt, was to use the schools as a vehicle for forcing the Dutch language upon the Uitlander children. Dr. Mansvelt even endeavoured to get all schools, except state schools, suppressed. This was in order to counteract the initiative of the Uitlanders who endeavoured to organise an educational system of their own, for which they raised by voluntary contribution a sum of £110,000 early in 1899.

The education question.

Character of the Transvaal Government. Practically a despotism.

The Government, to whose arbitrary power the Uitlander community was thus subjected, consisted of the President and an Executive Council of six persons. Practically all legislation in the Volksraad was initiated by the Government.

The Volksraad itself consisted of twenty-six members, and the sense of responsibility with which these members performed their duties has been exemplified in the instance of the Selati Railway concession previously referred to. Their intelligence and their conceptions of the duties of government can best be gathered by a perusal of some of their debates, *i.e.* the debate on locust extermination in 1892, in which members denounced the proposed measure as against the will of God, who had expressly ordained locusts as a punishment for sins. Of constitutional practice the Raad knew little. The most important measures were passed by mere resolution at a moment's notice. The President attended and usually led the debates of the Raad. His relations with it may perhaps be likened to the relations of a despotic father to a family of grown-up sons. Sometimes they fought, sometimes the Raad rebelled, but, on the whole, despotism prevailed. An outbreak of simulated indignation on the part of the President, a threat to resign the Presidency, aided perhaps subsequently by some judicious persuasion on the President's own *stoep*, were usually enough to overcome opposition. Practically, to all intents and purposes, both Legislature and Executive were combined in one person—and that person President Kruger.

Kruger's attempt to crush independence of judiciary. Cases of Nellmapius and Doms.

But even these powers, great as they were, did not wholly satisfy the President. He aimed at uniting in his own person all that represented supreme authority within the State. This aim was not compatible with the existence of an independent judiciary. On several occasions Kruger had taken upon himself to override the decisions of a court of law when displeasing to him. In 1886 Kruger's friend and special favourite, the ex-valet and concessionaire Nellmapius, was tried for embezzlement of moneys belonging to the powder factory and condemned to eighteen months' imprisonment. The President promptly ordered his release. Judge Brand, whose sentence was thus set aside, promptly sent in his resignation, and a crisis between the President and the judiciary was with difficulty patched up. But President Kruger claimed much more. He claimed to control the High Court itself by simple resolution of the Legislature.

A case known as the Doms Case, which occurred in 1887, served to place this right on record. A man of the name of Doms brought an action against the Government for the transfer of certain properties. The Government refused to fight the action, and laid the summons before the Volksraad. The Volksraad disposed of the question by a resolution that "The Volksraad has considered the claim of Doms, denies it, and declares as a final decision that he is not entitled to the farms for which the action is instituted." The Doms claim was generally believed to have been well founded, but the justice or injustice of the claim is of course immaterial. What is material is that the Government claimed the right to override the law by chance resolutions snatched from a body of the character already indicated above by an all-powerful and unscrupulous Executive.

CHAPTER VI

THE INTERNAL STRUGGLE IN THE TRANSVAAL

1887–1895. Kruger's struggle to maintain his supremacy within the Transvaal.

President Kruger's policy during all the years between 1881 and 1899 may be divided into two parts: on the one hand the struggle with the British Government for the complete restoration of the independence of the Transvaal, and for the ultimate supremacy in South Africa, and on the other the struggle to maintain in power within the Transvaal himself and the reactionary party which had ruined President Burgers and had been placed in supreme control of the country by the victorious insurrection of 1881. In Kruger's eyes the internal struggle was as important as the external. For the period from 1887 to 1895, with which this chapter deals, the internal struggle was perhaps even the more important of the two. Throughout it Kruger's tenure of power was extremely insecure, and it was only his strength of will, his cunning and unscrupulousness, and his amazing good fortune that enabled him to hold out.

1888–1893. Kruger's second term of office. Discontent of Progressive Boers. The South African Uitlanders.

In 1886 the Kruger *régime* was, as has already been related, at the nadir of its popularity. Its administrative incompetence and financial corruption had brought the State to the verge of brankruptcy, and disgusted the majority of the burghers. It was saved from imminent downfall by the discovery of the Witwatersrand. The Government benefited by the general wave of prosperity, and on its crest President Kruger was re-elected in the beginning of 1888. It was in this, President Kruger's second term of office, that the worst abuses in the Transvaal developed on the lines already indicated. It was not long before their results were apparent in widespread and profound dissatisfaction alike

among the more progressive Boers and among the new immigrants. The incompetence of the administration and the delays in the construction of the Netherlands Railway were placing almost insuperable obstacles in the way of the development of the mines. The Progressive party among the Boers, led by General Joubert, strongly espoused the cause of the Uitlanders. This party, among whose most prominent members were Mr. Ewald Esselen, who had been secretary to the 1883 delegates and a Judge of the High Court, and Mr. Eugene Marais, editor of the Progressive newspaper *Land en Volk*, objected almost as strongly as the Uitlanders themselves to the manner in which they saw the public offices invaded by shoals of needy and unscrupulous Hollanders and the spirit of their local institutions perverted by foreign influence. Dr. Leyds especially, whom the Progressives credited with being the moving spirit in all the principal swindles and whom the President insisted on appointing to the important post of State Secretary in the spring of 1889, was the special object of their aversion. The Uitlanders, on their side, were forced unwillingly to realise that nothing less than Parliamentary control of the institutions of the country would ensure the reforms essential to prosperity. This was first perceived by the South African section of the Uitlanders—that is the settlers who had come into the Transvaal from other parts of South Africa, who were accustomed to the ways of the country, most of whom spoke the language, who intended to make their home within its borders, and to acquire its citizenship.

The capitalists hold aloof from politics.

At that period the "capitalists," that is to say the English, French, and German heads of the great financial houses, were regarded with something approaching to suspicion and dislike by the Progressives, whether Uitlanders or Boers, who saw in them financiers able to obtain justice for their own ends in a market where it was to be bought, and indifferent to reform. The capitalists, on their part, professing to regard themselves as the trustees of vast interests committed to their care, held aloof, with what has since been condemned as excessive caution, from movements which threatened to embroil them with existing authority.

In April, 1889, General Joubert visited Natal and openly declared his disapproval of the President's fiscal and railway policy, and his intention to thwart it by securing the construction of a railway to connect Durban with the Rand. Kruger began to be seriously alarmed by the openly-avowed coalition of the Progressives and the Uitlanders. The South African Uitlanders had been among the very first to invade the Rand in 1886 and 1887, and according to the franchise law of 1882 great numbers of them would become full burghers of the state before the end of 1892, the date of the next presidential election. The result of that election was a certainty for Joubert unless something could be done to prevent the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders. It is interesting to observe that the struggle between Kruger and the Uitlanders belongs to both the phases of his policy mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It was the desire of retaining the fleshpots of office — the internal aspect of Kruger's policy—that was predominant in his treatment of the Uitlanders up to the first appeal for Imperial intervention made by the Uitlanders in 1894. But from the very first Kruger endeavoured, by identifying the Uitlanders with the Imperial Government, to represent their suppression as a necessity for the supremacy of Afrikanderdom. After Sir H. Loch's interference in the commandeering question, and still more after the Jameson Raid, he succeeded in this endeavour sufficiently to win over to his side or weaken the leaders of the Progressive Boers and to recover the sympathies of the Dutch in the Free State and Cape Colony whom his unscrupulous policy had estranged.

Kruger alarmed at prospect of Uitlanders reinforcing Progressives.

Already in the beginning of 1889 Kruger had brought forward a plan for the alteration of the franchise. The main feature of the plan was the division of the Volksraad into two Volksraads, the lower having nominally fairly large functions in questions of mining regulations, etc., but being in reality absolutely dependent for the exercise of its powers on the will of the First Volksraad. The franchise was ostensibly reduced to two years, but all the rights of citizenship were reserved to the original burghers, who alone could vote for the First Volksraad or for the election of the President

1889. Kruger's scheme for disfranchising the Uitlanders. The divided franchise.

or the Commandant-General. The enfranchised Uitlander could only attain to the privileges of a full burgher after twelve years of probation, during which he was really citizen of no country. In the debate in the Volksraad at the end of May, Kruger strongly urged the danger of the Republican spirit being weakened in the Transvaal by the admission to citizenship of men who might sympathise with the ideal of a united South Africa under the British flag, at the same time with characteristic "slimness" representing the measure as a concession to the Uitlanders, giving them all they wanted while reserving the real power in the hands of the old burghers. The Progressives vigorously opposed the proposal. Mr. Celliers, editor of the *Volksstem*, said that he would rather resign his seat than vote for a system of class legislation which should put the majority at the mercy of the minority. Joubert declared that if the law were passed it would be as well to obliterate the motto, "Unity makes strength" (*Eendragt maakt magt*), from the arms of the Republic. But in the end Kruger got his way, and the proposed legislation was carried through in 1890. It was slightly amended and modified in 1891, 1892, and 1894, though always in a sense adverse to the Uitlanders' interests.

Protests of the Progressives.

From that time onward it remained in force up till the period of the Bloemfontein Conference. In effect it amounted to an absolute exclusion of the Uitlanders from full citizenship. The intending citizen had first to register his intention to be naturalized in the books of the field-cornet of his ward. Residence previous to registration counted for nothing, and the Uitlanders who had come to the Transvaal in 1886 or 1887 were no nearer citizenship than those that came four years later. Two years after registration the aspirant to Transvaal burghership became enfranchised, if he could prove that he had lived in the country during that period and obeyed all the laws, upon taking an oath of allegiance to the Republic which included a formal renunciation of allegiance to the State from which he came, and upon paying a fee of £5. Two years later, *i.e.* four years after his registration, he was eligible for the Second Volksraad, provided he was thirty years of age, owner of landed property in the Trans-

Absolute exclusion of the Uitlanders from citizenship. Terms of the new law.

PAUL KRUGER IN 1881.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

GENERAL PIET JOUBERT IN 1890,

COMMANDANT-GENERAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC 1881-1900.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

vaal, and member of a Protestant Church. This was for all practical purposes as far as the Uitlander could hope to get. In return for the privileges of a Transvaal subject and the liability to serve on commando, he could take part in the elections for field-cornets and other minor officials, and for the Second Volksraad, of which body he might even be a member and discuss any trifles that the First Volksraad chose to consider within the scope of the inferior body. It is true that ten years after the new-comer had become eligible for the Second Volksraad—that is, when he was at least forty years of age, and had been at least fourteen years in the country—he might get the full franchise, provided the majority of burghers in his ward signified their desire *in writing* that he should obtain it, and provided the President and Executive saw no objection, and become further eligible, under certain regulations, for membership of the First Volksraad if that body passed a resolution to admit him. But these possibilities were too remote to enter into any practical calculations. The difficulty of complying even with the very first conditions of enfranchisement was somewhat strikingly illustrated in 1891 when the field-cornet of Johannesburg died, and it was found that he had preserved no lists of the names of thousands of persons who had registered in compliance with the law.

No protest from the Imperial Government.

So utterly monstrous were the conditions of this series of disfranchisement laws, that it is difficult to understand how Lord Salisbury's Government could have allowed them to pass without strong protest. The explanation probably lies in the fact that at that date the Uitlander community itself—at least the section interested in reform—never contemplated the possibility of Imperial intervention; and that without an appeal, such as was provided by the Uitlander petition in 1899, the Imperial Government had no *locus standi* in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. It is possible also that neither the British Agent at Pretoria nor the High Commissioner sufficiently understood the character and scope of the measures brought forward.

The quarrel between Kruger and the Uitlanders was precipitated in March 1890, on the occasion of the President's

March 1890. Tumult on occasion of Kruger's visit to Johannesburg.

visit to Johannesburg. The share market had collapsed, and a drought, combined with the persistent refusal of the President to allow the railway through the Free State to be continued to the Rand, threatened a famine. These things, added to the general misgovernment and the impending hostile legislation with regard to the franchise, had created profound dissatisfaction among the Uitlander community. Kruger delivered an address in the Wanderers' Hall. In spite of his promise that the railway should be built, the tone of his speech gave great offence. In the evening a large demonstration took place outside the house occupied by the President, and only the presence of mind of the police saved Kruger from being mobbed. As it was the Transvaal flag was pulled down from the Government buildings and torn to shreds. Kruger left the town vowing that he would never visit it again. From that moment hostility between the President and the Uitlanders was declared. His sentiments, and the little trouble which he took to conceal them, may be inferred from the opening of a speech made by him not long afterwards at Krugersdorp, where it was reasonably to be supposed that Uitlanders formed a portion of his audience. Standing up to address the mixed multitude, he began, "Burghers, friends, thieves, murderers, new-comers, and others." The "thieves, murderers, new-comers, and others" are from about this date to be found working steadily to put themselves on some sort of political equality with the "burghers and friends."

August 1892. The Transvaal National Union formed.

Early in 1892 the discontent was increased by the passing of the New Customs Act, so framed as to tax especially all articles consumed by Uitlanders, and in this year we find the first organised endeavour on the part of the Uitlanders to agitate for reform. In August 1892 the Transvaal National Union was formed and soon counted many thousands of Uitlanders among its members. At the first great meeting of the Union, numbering about 3,000 persons, which was held in the amphitheatre at Johannesburg on the 22nd of August, all the principal interests of the Uitlander community, with the exception of what was known as the capitalist interest, were represented by their special delegates. The committee of the Union was a highly representative body and the

chairman was a South African, Mr. Tudhope, who had been a member of a colonial ministry at the Cape. At this first meeting the reasons for the formation of the Union were put forward and its object was clearly stated to be two-fold. It was to obtain "political rights and the redress of grievances."

The Union demands the franchise.

It was pointed out in the course of the speeches made that the "whole state was suffering under the misgovernment and rapacity of a chosen few"; that respectful deputations to the Government had been tried and failed, and that the only remedy was to be found in parliamentary representation for the whole people. But this determination was coupled with a clearly expressed resolution to uphold the independence of the Transvaal, and to admit of no external interference. Resolutions respectfully worded were voted, and were subsequently laid by a deputation before the Government. An unsatisfactory public reply was returned in which President Kruger alleged as a reason for not granting the request for parliamentary representation that the Uitlanders were already in a majority in the State. It was on this occasion that Kruger said privately, with great display of anger, to the members of the deputation: "Go back and tell your people I shall never give them anything; I shall never change my policy; and now let the storm burst!"

Mr. Esselen on the Union platform. The Union manifesto.

From this time forward "Representation and Reform" became the watchword of the Uitlander party, and in the early years of the movement was echoed by the Progressive Boer party in the state. The reports of the meetings of the National Union present a slight but useful indication of the history of the movement. In September of 1892, after the return of the fruitless deputation to Pretoria, we find Mr. Esselen speaking on the platform of the Union, and declaring himself to be in full accord with its programme. No Uitlander speaker was as frank as he in expressing condemnation and distrust of President Kruger. It was at this meeting resolved "To appeal from the existing Government to the burghers who elect the Government, and as a consequence a manifesto or statement of the grievances of the Uitlanders, and of the aims with which the National Union had been formed, was drawn up in Dutch and subsequently

printed and distributed through the country. It is interesting to note during the whole of this period the evident intention of the reforming party to act in the interests of the Transvaal and without help from outside. The reforms proposed were essentially moderate and constitutional in their tone, the professed object being to enlist Boer sympathy in the endeavour to restore the original Grondwet or Constitution of the Transvaal which had been altered by the law of 1890, and to enable the country to be governed in the spirit of the thirty-three Articles voted by the people in 1849. Branches of the National Union were also formed in other towns besides Johannesburg. The response to the manifesto was very satisfactory, and information reached the Union from many quarters that Boers were prepared to agitate in favour of the reform movement, and that a continually increasing party in the state was disposed to meet the Uitlanders in their demands.

The 1893 election. Kruger's unscrupulous tactics.

It was at the end of 1892 that President Kruger for the third time offered himself for election to the position of head of the State. General Joubert, representing the party of reform, was his opponent. Kruger had all the advantage of his official position, and used it to the full with an energy and unscrupulousness that compel admiration. The landdrosts and field-cornets were almost everywhere his creatures, and the machinery of local government and the registration of voters were thus entirely in his hands. The reactionary majority of the Transvaal clergy threw themselves strongly on his side against Joubert, who professed comparatively liberal views on religious matters. All Hollanderdom and concessionairedom contributed their quota to pay for the defence of the interests vested in the Kruger *régime*. The formation of election committees was by resolution of the Volksraad simply forbidden to the general public, but Kruger had the whole Civil Service as an Election Committee for himself. Everything that could make it safe and advantageous to vote on his side was done. Nothing that could make it dangerous and disadvantageous to vote for General Joubert was left undone. Officials who expressed Progressive sympathies were dismissed for showing

partisanship. Mr. Keith, proprietor of the *Transvaal Advertiser*, was flung into gaol on a charge of high treason for venturing to assert that the President had been using public moneys for election purposes. A general election for the First Volksraad immediately preceded the Presidential election. Kruger took steps to secure the return of his own supporters to the Raad. The law provided that in cases of disputed elections the old member should continue till the question was settled. Accordingly, whenever an old Krugerite was defeated, some trivial objection was raised, which enabled him to retain his seat and help to decide appeals both on the Raad and the Presidential elections. Joubert's supporters were shamelessly unseated and their appeals were quashed.

Kruger declared elected. Civil war imminent, averted by Joubert's hesitation.

With the composition of the Raad thus provided for, Kruger faced the poll for the Presidential election. Notwithstanding all that had been done, no doubt is entertained in the country that General Joubert was actually elected. The voting, after manipulation, was officially announced as 7,911 for Kruger, and 7,246 for Joubert. General Joubert, having good reason to believe that the votes had been tampered with, appealed to the Raad. The appeal was vain. Kruger's Raad decided that Kruger had won the election, and Kruger entered accordingly on a renewed lease of Presidential power. Feeling ran so high that civil war was at the time openly talked of. The Progressive leaders seriously entertained the thought of arming the Uitlanders and fighting the matter out. But their advances were met with comparative indifference by the Uitlander community, the majority of whom believed that it would be better to abstain from so direct an interference in the politics of the country till they had obtained their political rights, and were also for reasons of business averse to facing the prospect of civil war. Their abstention was a tactical mistake. Their interests were associated with the success of General Joubert; and, had they thrown themselves warmly into his election, they would not only have secured his return, but also certainly have won the cordial sympathy of his party. As it was, their abstention was badly received by his followers, and President Kruger's

hostility was not to be modified by their discretion. It is probable that if General Joubert had been of the stern fighting calibre of President Kruger, an appeal to arms would have been made. But Joubert, partly from timidity and hesitation, partly also from patriotic reluctance to plunge his country into the horrors of civil war—a reluctance Kruger had never shown in his younger days and would not have shown then if the Raad had decided against him—accepted the flagrant wrong which had been done, and from that moment the party of which he was the leader declined in power. President Kruger appreciated the importance of "conciliating" some of its members. The Boer movement of reform fell practically to pieces.

At the annual meeting of the National Union in 1893, resolutions were passed praying for reconsideration of the political claims of the Uitlanders and calling attention to the unequal incidence of the new customs tariff imposed without necessity, at a time when a surplus of £200,000 was acknowledged. Strong protests were also made against the incompetence and extortionate rates of the Netherlands Railway Company.

1894. The commandeering crisis.

Early in 1894 a petition to the Government, praying for the grant of the franchise on reasonable terms, was drawn up and signed by 13,000 persons. The petition was unconditionally rejected. About the same time a native war against the chief Malaboch broke out in the northern portion of the state. There was a surplus of £1,000,000 in the Treasury, and under the circumstances the custom of commandeering for the purpose of small local wars was anyhow coming to be an abuse even when imposed upon the burghers, who practically paid no other form of taxation than personal service. With an insolence that is almost incredible the Government decided to commandeer British subjects to go to the front. The pretence on which this was done was that they had not inscribed themselves on the British Agent's list —in accordance with a provision which had long since fallen into disuse—and that there was no formal treaty of exemption with Great Britain as there was with most other states. British subjects who refused were ill-treated and flung into

gaol. Immense indignation was created among the Uitlander community by this act of oppression. That they should be ordered out to serve in the field at a moment when they had just been excluded for ever from taking effective part in the government of the country, brought the whole anomaly of their position into grim relief. Their industry, their intelligence, their property, and their lives were to be at the unconditional service of the State, and they were to have no say in the disposal of them.

The Uitlanders appeal to the Imperial Government. Sir H. Loch visits Pretoria.

In their extremity they appealed to Great Britain. The Home Government, instead of replying with a prompt ultimatum to the Transvaal, showed a pitiable weakness and hesitation. In spite of the urgent appeals of Sir Jacobus de Wet, the British Agent, it was not till the end of June that it finally instructed Sir Henry Loch, the High Commissioner, to proceed to Pretoria. He was received by the British population of Pretoria with tremendous enthusiasm. A petition signed by 14,800 persons was presented to him on his arrival. The excitement was so intense that he was specially requested not to visit Johannesburg, lest his presence might lead to an armed demonstration against the Government of Pretoria. Among those most active in endeavouring to allay the public excitement was the President of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines, representing the capitalist section of the population, and it is noticeable that at a meeting of the National Union, held shortly after these events, bitter reproaches were levelled at the capitalists for failing to take their place in leading the movement of reform. They were described as "misers standing over their hoards afraid to utter a voice," and opprobriously alluded to as "skulking through the streets of Pretoria like curs that followed a leader." At this same meeting of 1894 the warning was first heard that "if the present policy were persisted in blood would be shed in the streets of Johannesburg."

The commandeering claim abandoned. Mistake of Home

The result of the High Commissioner's visit was so far successful that the Government of Pretoria agreed, but not till a resort to force had been threatened, to abandon the commandeering claim. Uitlanders who had been taken

Government in not pressing Uitlander claims.

as prisoners to the front were set at liberty and allowed to find their way back to Pretoria and Johannesburg. But nothing was done to remedy the general situation of the Uitlander community. Sir H. Loch had brought with him a despatch urging the restoration of the five years franchise. But a weak and divided Government did not think of the possibility of demanding this as a right. It only thought of bargaining it for some alteration in the Convention. Fortunately Kruger was not in the mood for bargaining then and the despatch was never presented. The fault was not with the High Commissioner, who showed energy and decision. He quietly moved the small British forces then in South Africa to points nearer the Transvaal border, and was fully determined to insist on immediate redress at all hazards. It was the Home Government that on this occasion lost an opportunity for an intervention which might have averted much future mischief. Eighteen months later, when a more energetic Colonial Secretary than Lord Ripon was in office, it was the weakness of another High Commissioner that lost a second opportunity. In any case the commandeering incident was a most important turning-point in the history of the Transvaal crisis. It marks the first attempt—unfortunately in the main unsuccessful—of the Uitlanders to appeal directly to the Imperial Government.

1894. The Uitlanders try to secure a Progressive Volksraad.

The reform party among the Uitlanders resolved to make one more attempt to work with the reform party of the Transvaal to obtain redress by peaceful and constitutional means. In this attempt some at least of the capitalists were induced to join. In the latter end of 1894 elections were again to take place for the First Volksraad. It was resolved to endeavour to influence them in the interests of the Progressive party, partly by the dissemination of literature, and the employment of agents to enlighten the people of the country districts as to the true condition of affairs prevailing at Pretoria, and partly by the selection of candidates of enlightened views and high character in the various districts who should be supported in opposition to the Government member. Funds were wanted for the purpose. Appeals were made to the firms and individuals commonly spoken of

as representing the capitalist interests, and the appeals were responded to. Several thousand pounds were contributed as an electioneering fund, and great hopes were entertained of the experiment.

The Progressive Volksraad worse than its predecessors.

So far as the election went the attempt to enlighten the electorate seemed successful. As a result of the voting the Progressive Party was declared to have secured sixteen seats out of twenty-six in the new Volksraad. But, as concerned reform, the effect of this experiment was to bring home conviction to the Uitlander community that no effectual redress of grievances could be obtained by the attempt to exercise indirect influence through the Volksraad. The session of 1895, held by the Volksraad which they had devoted so much labour and money to reform, was the most disastrous session to their interest of any held up to that date in Pretoria. Not satisfied with the disabilities laid upon the existing generation of Uitlanders, the Volksraad of 1894 had added to the franchise law a provision by which the children of Uitlanders who were born in the State should be subject to the same disabilities as their fathers. With every year more persons had come into the Transvaal, having the intention to settle in the country and make it the home of their families, and the provisions carrying on the disabilities of immigrants to the next generation were hotly resented, as showing a distinct intention to make of the Uitlanders a "pariah" or "helot" class of permanently inferior standing in the country. In 1895 a renewed petition for the franchise was drawn up. It was signed by 38,500 people, the increase from the 13,000 signatures of the year before giving some indication of the rapid extension of the reform movement. It is also to be noted that on this petition the names of the principal capitalists appeared amongst the signatures. The petition was presented to the Raad and debated in the third week of August, 1895. Those who wish to understand the nature of the legislature—the reformed legislature—by which the increasingly important affairs of the Uitlander community were administered, could not do better than read the report of this debate. It was in the course of it that one member, Mr. Otto, challenged the Uitlanders, if

1895. The great franchise petition. Debate in the Volksraad.

they wanted reform, to "come on and fight for it." But if what was said by irresponsible members served to show the feeling of a section of the burghers, what was said by the President, with whom rested the initiation of all legislation on the subject, was of more importance as bearing upon the practical issue. "This business (of asking for reform) had been repeated," he said, "from year to year until he was tired of it. Why should they worry and weary the burghers any more by submitting the motion to them? There was no need for it. There was no uncertainty about it. The burghers knew their minds and their will, which was supreme, was known." The Uitlanders' petition was rejected. They were told that the burghers' will was supreme, and that they must submit to it.

Boer views of Kruger's policy.

The different views taken by the Boers themselves of the policy thus finally adopted are illustrated by two comments which have been preserved. President Kruger, on being remonstrated with by an influential friend of Boer sympathies but of European experience, who strongly recommended that he should make some slight concession, led his friend into the middle of the street and pointed to the Transvaal flag flying over the Government buildings. "You see that flag?" he said. "If I grant the franchise I may as well pull it down." An old Boer, Gert de Jager, present at the debate on the petition turned to those who stood round him when the debate was over and said, "Now our country is gone! Nothing can settle this but fighting, and there is only one end to the fight. Kruger and his Hollanders have taken our independence more surely than ever Shepstone did."

The old Boer was right. President Kruger and his Hollanders destroyed the independence of the Republic by their refusal to incorporate with it the elements of strength which the Uitlander community, fully anxious as it was at that time to manage local affairs without outside interference, would have brought to its maintenance and development. Kruger's attitude appears almost inexplicable unless one remembers that what he endeavoured to preserve was not so much the liberty and independence of the Transvaal as a

republic, as the continued predominance of the faction whose leader he had been for more than twenty years. He was right when he felt that to admit the Uitlander community to political power was to sign the warrant of his own dismissal. What he failed to perceive was that his predominance was in any case doomed, and that by his desperate clinging to power he was only endangering the existence of the Republic. But with grim determination he stuck to his course, playing his cards boldly like a desperate gambler, till at last he was forced to stake all on the one issue of war.

The Volksraad of 1895. Mr. Esselen attempt to deal with the liquor question.

In 1895 President Kruger and his admirers would seem to have been troubled by no doubts. The reformed Raad was no less submissive to the will of the President than former Raads had been. It was in the session of 1895 that the war tax, so arranged as to fall on land held by Uitlanders and to pass over land held by burghers, was proposed. In this session a transfer duty of 4 per cent. upon the purchase price of fixed property, applying, of course, principally to the transfer of mining claims, was enforced. Police administration in the same year went from bad to worse. The granting of licenses to liquor houses became a public danger. Mr. Esselen had been induced in 1894 to accept the position of State Attorney on condition that he should have a free hand in reorganizing the police and detective forces. He threw himself earnestly into his work, and appointed as chief detective a Mr. Trimble, a capable officer lent by Cape Colony. The illicit liquor and the illicit gold-buying interests took alarm, and urged their influence with the President. Kruger insisted on Trimble's dismissal, and Mr. Esselen resigned.

Kruger's attack on the independence of the High Court.

The most dangerous blow which had yet been aimed at the judicial system was in this year directed against the independence of the High Court. The duel declared in 1887 between the Government and the High Court had been more or less continuously renewed. In 1892 the Chief Justice had had occasion to make public protest. In 1894 a Committee appointed to revise the Constitution introduced modifications so important into the relations existing between the Judiciary and the Executive that Chief Justice

Kotzé, speaking at Rustenburg in October of that year, solemnly warned the burghers that—

"According to the altered provisions as recommended by the Volksraad Committee the Courts of Justice from the lowest to the highest in the land would have been so affected in the independent exercise of their functions that it would simply have been an impossibility to have dispensed justice between man and man without favour or prejudice. The altered provisions in question assign powers and functions to the Executive and the Legislature which at present belong exclusively to the Courts of Justice . . . The very independence of the Republic which is so inseparably connected with the independence of the Courts of Law would have come to an end."

The Brown case.

It was in 1895 that the pretensions of the Government to control the Courts—placed on record by the Doms Case of 1887—was brought to a definite test. A goldfield at a place called Witfontein had been proclaimed open by the Government for the pegging of public claims. As is usual in such cases the public waited anxiously for the day and hour of opening, and a rush then took place to secure claims. The Government, fearing a riot, cancelled the proclamation after the hour on which the ground had become open for pegging, and decided to dispose of the claims by lottery. The persons who had pegged claims protested that the action of the Government in changing their mind after the ground had been publicly proclaimed was illegal. An American named Brown determined to test the case, and sued the Government in the High Court. The Executive, to dispose of this and other legal difficulties in connection with the matter, submitted a measure to the Volksraad that claims against the Government in regard to their action at Witfontein should not lie; that persons who thought they had claims for damages had none, and that the Government was absolved from all liability. The Volksraad obediently passed the measure. The vote had its sequel in the subsequent High Court crisis and the dismissal in 1897 of the Chief Justice. The immediate effect was to bring home to the mind of the Uitlander that the last guarantee of justice had disappeared. A corrupt Government had declared

itself to be above the law. Scandal in the meantime followed scandal. There is neither space nor need to recapitulate them all. In whatever direction the Uitlanders looked hope of peaceful progress was debarred. The climax was reached when they found that of the money so shamelessly taken from them, a considerable portion was to be used for the equipment of a military system designed to keep them for ever by force of arms in the position of subjugation in which they found themselves.

1895. The policy of force revealed. Transvaal armaments.

In 1895 it became known that large orders had been placed in Europe for big guns, Maxims, and rifles, and in the estimates it was provided that £250,000 should be spent on the fortification of Pretoria, and £100,000 upon the erection of a fort to command Johannesburg. The intention with which this latter fort was to be constructed was not left in doubt, for in 1892 President Kruger had observed, in choosing the site for a gaol on a commanding position in the residential quarter of the town, that "some day the town would be troublesome, and that he should want to turn the gaol into a fort, and arm it, before that time came." On another occasion he had retorted impatiently to a deputation which went to him to protest against certain measures. "Protest! Protest! What is the good of protesting? You have not got the guns. I have." Already in 1887 he had threatened to call out his burghers and shoot the Uitlanders down as rebels. His attempt in the same year to obtain terms of alliance from President Brand, which should give him the help of the Free State burghers to suppress any Uitlander rising, has elsewhere been referred to. It had always been the custom of the Boer Executive to keep secret a large portion of their expenditure. In 1893 military expenditure, public works, and the secret sums amounted altogether to the total of £500,000. In 1894 the total was £782,000. In 1895 it was £741,000. In all, there was £2,000,000 in three years, which might have been used for any purpose pleasing to the Executive. When, therefore, in August of 1895, a debate in the Raad inadvertently revealed the fact that in the course of the year 1894 all the burghers of the Transvaal had been supplied with new Martini-Henry rifles, and that

3000 Guedes rifles had been ordered, there was no difficulty in understanding where the money came from to pay for these things. Neither was there any difficulty in realising by whose taxation it was proposed to pay for the larger orders for heavy guns yet to be executed by European firms. In countries which are governed according to constitutional precedent heavy expenditure is not incurred without the sanction of the tax-payer. The Transvaal tax-payer had no such guarantee, and when he heard, through private business channels, of large artillery orders placed in Europe, he had every reason to believe the rumour true. The situation was aggravated by the open profession of friendship with Germany at that time made by President Kruger, the rumours of a promised alliance between the two countries waiting only for the abrogation of the British Convention of 1884, in order to be formally concluded, and the statements current in well-informed circles that the new army of the Transvaal was to be organised and drilled by German instructors.

The verge of revolution.

It has been shown that the capitalistic section of the Johannesburg community had, up to the time of the commandeering incident in 1894, remained practically aloof from the reform movement. Their position up to this time was strong, for while they exercised a certain individual influence upon President Krüger, they also constituted the point of union between the reform party of Johannesburg and the progressive party in the Transvaal, which constantly appealed to them to support a policy of patience and to endeavour to obtain reform by peaceful means. In 1894 they so far departed from their attitude of abstention as to give money to be used as an electioneering fund for the reform of the Raad. The Raad of 1895 was their experiment. The failure of the experiment was complete. No session in Transvaal history was more clearly disastrous to the interests of justice and good government than the session of 1895. During this session revolution was for the first time commonly talked of. During this session the capitalists came to the determination to espouse the popular cause, and from that moment revolution was inevitable.

CHAPTER VII

THE JAMESON RAID

THE situation in the Transvaal was rapidly approaching a crisis. President Kruger showed plainly that he was determined to screw down the safety-valve—press laws and laws controlling public meetings were but an outward sign of that determination. The policy of force was becoming daily more and more outspoken. Kruger's policy had been aggressive towards England and repressive towards the Uitlanders from the very first, but it was only in 1894 and 1895 that he realised that the policy which had largely alienated the Dutch outside of the Transvaal, and had provoked the bitter hatred of the English, required the creation of a military system going a long way beyond what had proved sufficient for the insurrection of 1881 or the subjugation of unruly Kaffir chiefs. The policy of large armaments may be said to have been decided on after the commandeering crisis in 1894, and the preliminary arrangements concerned with it, the orders for new artillery, the designs for new forts, the importation of German instructors, occupied the chief attention of Kruger's Government during the following year. The Raid was not the cause of the policy of armament, but a frantic attempt to forestall it, whose failure only served to excuse that which it would prevent. The Transvaal was to become the Prussia of South Africa. And it was to Prussia that Kruger looked, not only for inspiration and example, but for actual material help. There had been intrigues with Germany ever since Kruger's European tour which followed the signing of the London Convention; the German settlement on the coast of Damaraland, the appearance of German ships of war off Kosi Bay, the manœuvres of "Colonel" Schiel

Critical situation in the Transvaal.

Intrigues with Germany.

in Zululand, were not without their relation to Transvaal efforts at expansion. That there were such negotiations is freely admitted by Van Oordt, and was generally believed in South Africa at the time. More especially was this the case after a speech made by the President at a banquet given in honour of the German Emperor's birthday in January, 1895, in which he declared that the Transvaal was being trodden upon by one great Power, and therefore naturally sought protection from another, and that the time had come to knit ties of the closest friendship between Germany and the South African Republic, ties such as were natural between father and child. The speech created some sensation in England. The British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir E. Malet, asked for explanation on the subject from Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, who declared that German interests demanded the preservation of the *status quo* in South Africa, and hinted that Germany would regard any extension of British influence, such as an inclusion of the Transvaal in a customs and railway union with the British colonies, as a violation of that *status quo*. The answer was not one to reassure the British Government as to German designs. The full meaning of it became plain a few months later. What was the full extent of those negotiations, or how they might in certain circumstances have developed, will perhaps never be known. One good result at least of the Jameson Raid was that it gave the German Emperor an opportunity of estimating the determination of the British people not to tolerate any interference by a foreign power in South African affairs. While negotiating with Germany, Kruger was not altogether forgetful of South Africa outside of the Transvaal, and efforts were made to pick up again the thread of anti-British intrigue which had been somewhat interrupted for the last seven or eight years. The fact is that already in 1895 Kruger was beginning to see the necessity of the policy of concentration of all the Dutch element in South Africa, which was carried out so fully in the years following the Raid, but which he had hitherto neglected for more personal and party interests. The political leaders of the Dutch in Cape Colony, and with them all the more educated

DR. LEANDER STARR JAMESON, C.B.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

and statesmanlike section of the Dutch population in Cape Colony and the Free State, were thoroughly opposed to Kruger's internal policy, and openly expressed their disapproval. But their criticism was, after all, of the methods employed rather than of the object ultimately aimed at, and the nationalist sentiment which had been fostered ever since Majuba was too strong for them to take up a firm attitude against Krugerism at critical moments. None realised this better than Kruger, who never hesitated when it suited his convenience to flout Dutch opinion outside the Transvaal, because he knew that in the hour of stress it would always veer round to his side again. In proportion as the situation got acuter in the Transvaal, and as the oppression of the Uitlander grew more and more intolerable, so Dutch sympathy for the Uitlander grew weaker instead of stronger. In Cape Colony the latent opposition which had always existed to the anti-Kruger policy of Mr. Hofmeyr and Mr. Schreiner showed signs of increasing. The effect of the unnatural situation in the Transvaal was no less strong upon the British element in South Africa. The older generation of British colonists had never acquiesced in the theory set up after the Majuba surrender that the Boers were intended to be the dominant race in South Africa. The men who had borne the brunt of a whole generation of warfare in Basutoland, the Transkei, and Zululand, knew themselves to be the superiors both in courage and in military skill of the insurgents, whose much-vaunted prowess rested upon the defeat of a few small bodies of badly-led British regulars. They had at the time deeply resented the craven policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government, and that resentment was reawakened by Kruger's determination to treat the British as a conquered race. Moreover, the British element had increased enormously in the last decade as a direct consequence of the increased trade with the Transvaal. It was economically dependent, to no small extent, upon the mining industry of the Rand, and the misgovernment of the Uitlanders directly affected its interests. Every consideration of national sentiment and commercial interest combined to make the British population outside of the Transvaal chafe

Attitude of the Dutch outside the Transvaal.

Attitude of the British colonists.

at a state of affairs in that Republic which was steadily going from bad to worse.

The capitalists determine to secure reform. They turn to Mr. Rhodes.

Johannesburg was in a state of suppressed insurrection. The capitalists, who, for a long time had held aloof from all agitation, now abandoned the hope of purchasing tolerable administration or consideration for the welfare of the mining industry, and determined by some means or other to overthrow the existing Government. They had on several occasions, since Lord Loch's inconclusive visit to Pretoria, approached the Imperial Government in order to find out if there was any possibility of help or intervention, but without success. It is, perhaps, a matter for regret that they did not persevere more steadily with those efforts, and at last oblige the Imperial Government to take action. But the Imperial Government was not, till quite recently, in over good repute with the British inhabitants of South Africa. The idea of a general petition to the Queen would hardly have occurred to any one in 1895 as likely to have any effect whatsoever. In their difficulty the Uitlander leaders turned to Mr. Rhodes. Mr. Rhodes had good reason to dislike President Kruger. All his schemes for the unification of South Africa by railway and customs unions—unification based on the principle of racial equality and industrial development—were thwarted by the hostile obstinacy of the cunning and ambitious old despot with whom he had so vainly tried to come to terms. Mr. Rhodes' sympathies were not altogether with the Uitlanders. He had strongly denounced the pro-British demonstrations which had attended Lord Loch's visit to Pretoria in the preceding year. But a visit to the Transvaal soon after on railway matters connected with Kruger's intention to raise the rates on the line from Vereeniging to Johannesburg, in spite of a promise to the contrary given to Sir J. Sivewright at the time when the line was constructed, had shown him how impossible the state of affairs in that country was becoming. His interview with Kruger was a stormy one, and it is said that before leaving Mr. Rhodes warned the President that continuance in his policy meant the loss of Transvaal independence. Mr. Rhodes now saw that revolution in the Transvaal was inevitable, and he was

determined not to be left without a voice in the inception and control of a movement destined to be so momentous in its influence on the whole future of South Africa. Accordingly he promised his help to the Uitlanders. Negotiations were begun which ultimately led to the Johannesburg revolution and the Jameson Raid. Already in September Dr. Jameson visited Johannesburg, and undertook that about 5000 rifles should be smuggled into Johannesburg, while he himself should on the outbreak of the revolution come to aid the revolutionists with 1500 men, bringing another 1500 spare rifles. The Uitlanders on their side were to begin the revolution by seizing the arsenal at Pretoria, and destroying all the war-like material they could not make use of themselves.

The inception of the plot.

In the meantime, however, the projected revolution was very nearly forestalled by a forcible intervention on the part of the Imperial Government. The summer of 1895 was marked by a change of ministers in England, and the Colonial Secretaryship was taken by Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain had, as early as 1884, taken a prominent part in resisting the policy of indefinitely yielding to every act of aggression on the part of the Transvaal. And from the moment he came into office a new spirit of vigour and activity was infused into the colonial policy of Downing Street, which was destined inevitably to bring it sooner or later into direct conflict with Pretoria. Not that Mr. Chamberlain entered office with any intention of intervening in the internal affairs of the South African Republic. In fact, so far as the Imperial Government was concerned, the state of South Africa in July 1895 did not seem to require either immediate or heroic treatment. The political grievances of the Uitlanders were known, and had been stated by Lord Ripon, in the despatch to Lord Loch, which, however, was not presented to President Kruger. Still, in spite of the grievances, British capital and British subjects were steadily flowing into the Transvaal, and it might well be hoped that their increasing strength would before long make itself felt by obtaining a voice in the direction of the policy of the country. Meantime, and in this hope, the best course to be

July 1895. Change of ministry in England. Mr. Chamberlain's policy.

pursued was to avoid causes of offence. In view of the continuous difficulties of the past fourteen years, and of the more recent attempts to intrigue with Germany for support against the paramount power, it was necessary firmly to maintain the rights of Great Britain under the Conventions. At the same time there was no use in attempting to intervene prematurely in less important matters, while there still seemed to be fair prospect of things ultimately righting themselves. To maintain the Conventions in the interests of the Empire, and to allow the Uitlanders to work out their own salvation, was the policy that naturally commended itself to the new Colonial Secretary.

August, 1895. Kruger announces the closing of the Vaal drifts.

It was not long before the necessity arose of insisting on the maintenance of the London Convention. Kruger had learnt nothing from his experience in the period between 1887 and 1895. He had been compelled to admit the railway from Cape Colony to the Rand, but he had never acquiesced in it. The moment the Delagoa Bay line was completed he was determined that the Cape line should not be allowed to compete with it. An absolutely prohibitive rate was imposed on the fifty miles of Netherlands Railway from Vereeniging, on the Vaal, to Johannesburg. But even this measure did not avail to induce merchants to transfer their operations to Lourenço Marques, with its attendant disadvantages of fever and Portuguese administration. It was found more profitable to off-load goods at Vereeniging and send them to the Rand by ox-waggon. Mr. Kruger issued a proclamation in August declaring that, after October 1, no waggons bearing over-sea goods should enter the Transvaal by the Vaal drifts. The closing of the drifts created intense indignation all over South Africa. It was an insolent violation of the whole spirit of the Conventions. Fortunately, owing to the specification of the word "over-sea," which Mr. Kruger had inserted in order to enable the Free State farmers to continue transporting their produce to the Johannesburg market, it was also a violation of the letter of Article XIII. of the London Convention. The Uitlanders, at whose interests so direct a blow was struck, were helpless. But the Cape Government

at once protested in forcible terms to President Kruger. A month passed without any reply, during which time the proclamation came into operation with very serious results to colonial trade. Failing to obtain even an acknowledgment of their representations, the Cape Ministry appealed to the Home Government to maintain the Convention. After consulting the law officers Mr. Chamberlain replied on October 16 that the Consul-General of the South African Republic had been informed in full and unmistakable terms by Lord Salisbury that unless the drifts question were settled in accordance with the Cape and the Home Governments, Her Majesty's Government would be compelled to take up the case of the colony and could then not desist from their efforts until a satisfactory solution of the matter had been arrived at. The only effect of this message was an intimation from the Government of the Transvaal on October 22 "that if Ministers were of opinion that the exception made in favour of colonial goods is a violation of the Convention, they were prepared to close drifts to colonial as well as oversea goods" —a step which would of course only aggravate the damage to Cape Colony.

On November 1 Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson as follows:— Nov. 1. Mr. Chamberlain's ultimatum.

Subject to the conditions stated further on, I am prepared to authorise you to send to the Government of the South African Republic a message to the following effect:—

Message begins:—I am advised by the Law Officers of the Crown (who, it is hardly necessary to state, have examined the question from a purely legal standpoint) that the recent action of the South African Republic is a breach of Article XIII. of the London Convention. I am further advised that the Government of the South African Republic cannot now set itself right by making general the prohibition of entry by the drifts, so as to include colonial goods, if and when they reissue their Proclamation, which, I am surprised to observe, they appear to have some intention of doing. Her Majesty's Government accept the legal advice which they have received; but independently of their Conventional rights they are of opinion

that the closing of the drifts, and especially the extension of that measure to colonial goods, is so unfriendly an action as to call for the gravest remonstrance on their part. While anxious for an amicable settlement of the question, they must therefore protest against what they regard as an attempt to force the hand of the Cape Government in Conference by a proceeding which almost partakes of the nature of an act of hostility. *Proposed message ends.*

Mr. Chamberlain asks Cape Colony to share expenses in case of war.

You will communicate this message confidentially to your Ministers in writing, pointing out that when once it is sent Her Majesty's Government cannot allow the matter to drop until they have obtained a compliance with their demands, even if it should be necessary to undertake an expedition for that purpose. Her Majesty's Government do not intend that such an expedition should, like most previous colonial wars, be conducted at the entire cost of this country; and you should explain to your Ministers that you are therefore instructed to require from them a most explicit undertaking in writing that, if it becomes necessary to send an expedition, the Cape Parliament will bear half the gross expense, and that the Local Government will furnish a fair contingent of the fighting force, so far as its resources in men may suffice, besides giving the full and free use of its railways and rolling stock for military purposes.

If your Ministers cannot give you such assurances, you will report fully by telegraph, and defer action pending further instructions from me; but if you obtain these assurances in writing, explicitly and without qualification, you may send the above message to the Government of the South African Republic.*

Nov. 7. Kruger "climbs down."

The necessary assurances from the Cape Ministry were at once obtained; the telegram was forwarded and on November 7 the reply was received from Pretoria that "the Government would publish no further proclamation relating to the matter before consulting Her Majesty's Government." With a plaintive statement of innocence and a request for arbitration the incident terminated.

Reasons for Kruger's surrender.

What would have happened if Kruger had not "climbed down" unconditionally is hard to say. What is almost certain is that the Bond would have turned upon Schreiner and Rhodes and disowned them. It has often been said, to

* C. 8474, No. 13.

illustrate the evil effects of the Raid, that before the terrible moral shock and disillusionment of that event, the Bond was actually ready to declare war upon the Transvaal for the sake of British trade. No statement could be more misleading. The Bond knew nothing of the ultimatum till long after, and then Mr. Schreiner had to do humble penance for his offence and earned forgiveness only because of the strong attitude he had taken up against Mr. Rhodes after the discovery of the latter's complicity in the Raid. So too it has been hinted that Kruger's surrender was mainly due to the fact that he felt that he was in the wrong and that the opinion of South Africa was against him. Moral qualms of that character have never had any part in President Kruger's composition, and moral support is a thing to which he has always been supremely indifferent. His own historian, Van Oordt, puts the matter simply by saying that Kruger did not consider his armaments were sufficiently advanced and found that he could not reckon on the military support of the Free State. The reckless disregard of Free State interests with which he had announced his intention of shutting the drifts to all traffic whatsoever, sooner than open them to oversea goods, had deeply offended the Free Staters. Nor did the Free State burghers believe in 1895, as they believed in 1899, that the united republics would be more than a match for the Paramount Power.

Mistaken views of Kruger's policy.

Kruger's complete surrender created a great sensation at the time. It led many afterwards to believe that the old President's policy was entirely based on "bluff," and that he would always come down before the prospect of an ultimatum. Such a view was only partly true. Kruger never had any of that pride that makes other men adhere to a standpoint because they have once taken it up. Unless he regarded the point at issue as itself an absolutely vital one, he was always ready at the last moment to abandon it sooner than face a serious struggle. The opening of the drifts was a hindrance to the pursuit of the great project of preserving the Transvaal from English influence, but it was not a vital matter. It neither interfered with Kruger's personal supremacy, nor did it put the Uitlander into power in the state. On an issue which affected his whole policy

or his control of power, Kruger knew no such word as surrender. He might pretend to concede, he might haggle for terms in order to discover clearly what his opponent desired, he might offer something externally similar and absolutely different, but he would never yield.

Race between Kruger and Uitlanders to be armed first.

Kruger yielded on the question of the drifts. But he had not the slightest intention of modifying his policy towards the Uitlanders. If anything, his disregard of their wishes and interests was more flagrant in the last few months of 1895 than ever before. The only lesson he learnt from the crisis over the drifts was that of the necessity of hurrying on his armaments and strengthening his alliance in Europe. Dr. Leyds hastened off to Berlin to see "specialists" (from Essen and the Wilhelmstrasse) about his "sore throat." The orders for big guns and ammunition and the preliminary work in connection with the new defensive and coercive fortifications were pushed forward with all possible speed. Revolution sooner or later was now a certainty. Mr. Chamberlain's firm attitude led the Uitlander leaders to hope that once revolution broke out in the Transvaal the Imperial Government would do its duty promptly and intervene on their behalf. By intervention, however, the Uitlanders did not mean anything that should in any way alter the status of the Transvaal as an autonomous republic, or that should be a precedent to further intervention in the future. All they wanted was that, at the outbreak of revolution, the High Commissioner should mediate to prevent unnecessary bloodshed and, by throwing all his influence and, if necessary, the threat of armed intervention into the scale, should insist on President Kruger's giving way to their just demands.

British Government sympathises with Uitlanders.

The British Government on their side watched the progress of events with careful attention and with much sympathy; nothing pointed to any necessity for taking active steps. Rumours reached them from time to time that violent measures were in contemplation, but these rumours were continually falsified by the event, so that gradually the opinion gained ground that the Uitlanders did not mean to risk a collision with the Transvaal Government. At the same

time, while bound to deprecate violent measures, they were conscious of the existence of grievances in the Transvaal greater than have been held to justify many a revolution. They could not but feel that any movement in Johannesburg which was a spontaneous movement would justly claim the sympathy of every Liberal and of every Englishman. Even after the catastrophe of the Raid, Mr. Chamberlain stated this view in the frankest terms in his telegram of January 4, 1896—

"If those who are now a majority of the inhabitants of the Transvaal, but are excluded from all participation in its government, were, of their own initiative and without any interference from without, to attempt to reverse that state of things, they would, without doubt, attract much sympathy from all civilised communities who themselves live under a free government, and I cannot regard the present state of things in the South African Republic as free from danger to the stability of its institutions." *

Insinuations against Mr. Chamberlain.

During the autumn Mr. Chamberlain was in frequent communication with those who were in sympathy with the Reform movement. With the possibility before him of a revolution in the Transvaal with which he would naturally and rightly sympathise, it is not surprising that Mr. Chamberlain declined to put himself in a false position by receiving confidences from Dr. Rutherfoord Harris, the secretary of the Chartered Company, and others, which he conjectured, as he afterwards stated in his evidence before the Commission of Inquiry, referred to the plans of the Johannesburgers. It is further possible that he may have in the same manner passed over veiled allusions which appeared to refer to the same subject, but were really intended to lead up to a far more mischievous project. The insinuation has been persistently made both at home and abroad that Mr. Chamberlain was privy to the Raid. It has been explicitly denied again and again by Mr. Chamberlain, and his whole action at the moment when the Raid took place confirms that explicit denial. It was his duty to know the trend of events in the Transvaal and

* C. 7933, p. 19.

to know what he should do in certain emergencies. That those participators in the plot who had discussed Transvaal affairs with him came to the conclusion that he was "sound" and communicated the conclusion to their principals, or even twisted remarks of a purely general character into definite expressions of his wishes with a view to encouraging those principals, is no evidence against him.

Final arrangements for the plot.

Meanwhile the plot was being busily pushed forward in South Africa. In November Messrs. Charles Leonard and Lionel Phillips went from Johannesburg to Cape Town to see Mr. Rhodes, and the final plan of operations was decided on. The revolution was to break out in Johannesburg at the end of the year. In his capacity of director of the De Beers Company at Kimberley and of the Consolidated Gold Fields at Johannesburg, Mr. Rhodes was to manage the smuggling of arms into Johannesburg. As director of the Chartered Company he was to keep a force under Dr. Jameson on the Transvaal border near Mafeking, to ride into Johannesburg the moment the revolution broke out on the plea of preserving order and protecting the defenceless population of the town. As Prime Minister at the Cape he was to urge Sir Hercules Robinson to go up to Pretoria at once and intervene, and as leader of the Bond he was to do his best to keep the Dutch in Cape Colony quiet.

Reasons for presence of Jameson's force on the border.

The presence of the force under Dr. Jameson on the western border of the Transvaal was a result of the negotiations carried through during the summer between the Chartered Company and the Colonial Office by which the Company secured the control of the narrow strip of territory along the Transvaal border on the route of the proposed Bechuanaland Railway, and with it the transfer of the Bechuanaland Border Police. It has sometimes been asserted that this arrangement too implied foreknowledge of the Raid on the part of Mr. Chamberlain. No assumption could be more unwarranted. The matter was one largely of administrative convenience for the railway. And it was perfectly natural that, in view of the unsettled state of affairs in the Transvaal, Mr. Chamberlain should regard with satisfaction the presence on the Transvaal border of a small but efficient

force, which in an emergency—such as nearly arose over the drifts question in November—would be at the disposal of the Imperial Government.

Unjustifiable character of Mr. Rhodes' action.

The plot for a revolution at Johannesburg was, as far as the Uitlander leaders were concerned, a perfectly justifiable attempt to get rid of intolerable misgovernment. But with Mr. Rhodes it was different. If he had merely been a wealthy private citizen with a strong sense of the iniquity of Mr. Kruger's rule, his active participation in the revolution would have been excusable. If, as director of the Chartered Company, he had taken care to station a force on the Transvaal border to be at the disposal of the Imperial Government the moment it decided to intervene, he would only have earned praise for his foresight. If, as Prime Minister of Cape Colony, he had closed his eyes to the development of the conspiracy, and on the outbreak of revolution used all his political influence to secure Imperial intervention and to neutralise Dutch sympathy with President Kruger, he would have been no more deserving of blame than was Cavour when he connived at Garibaldi's invasion of Sicily. But he could not do all these things together. What was perhaps excusable in Rhodes, the director of the Consolidated Gold Fields, was absolutely inexcusable in Rhodes the Premier or Rhodes the head of the Chartered Company. No measure of success could have condoned the Raid. Even if Dr. Jameson had waited for definite news of the outbreak of the revolution before invading a neighbouring state with troops for whose actions the British Government was responsible, the public scandal might possibly have been less flagrant, but Mr. Rhodes' offence would have been no less serious. But when that is said the whole charge against Mr. Rhodes is given. Other charges have been made resting on the reckless invention of his personal enemies, or on baseless surmise. It has been asserted that the Raid was nothing but a gigantic Stock Exchange manœuvre, a desperate attempt to rehabilitate the finances of the Chartered Company by annexing the Transvaal to Rhodesia, a necessary prelude to a colossal amalgamation which was to make Johannesburg a second Kimberley. The simple facts were that Mr. Rhodes wished, as a capitalist,

to get rid of a corrupt and incompetent Government which seriously hampered the prosperity of the industry in which he was interested, as a statesman to upset a policy which sowed discord in South Africa and prevented the development and unification of the country, as an Englishman to put an end to the subjection of an active and intelligent English majority to the rule of an ignorant and hostile Boer minority. These motives are quite sufficient to explain Mr. Rhodes' actions, without recourse to insinuations which have neither evidence nor inherent probability to justify them.

Jameson the real instigator of the Raid.

But if the responsibility of the Raid rests with Mr. Rhodes, he was not the author of the scheme. The real originator and prime mover of the Raid was Dr. Jameson. The idea of riding into the Transvaal with a body of armed men and upsetting the oligarchy at Pretoria had flashed across his mind once at Bulawayo while reading a life of Clive. "Clive would have done it"—and Jameson, headstrong and impulsive, determined that he should do it too. His confidence and enthusiasm had persuaded Mr. Rhodes to allow the ride across the Transvaal to be carried through in co-operation with the uprising at Johannesburg. Still, for Mr. Rhodes the Raid was a subordinate part of his scheme, a thing to be prepared for and to be carried out under certain conditions, conditions which as a matter of fact never came into existence. For Dr. Jameson the Raid became a fixed idea, an object in itself, something to be carried out at all hazards, the success of which would set everything right. It was this overmastering desire of Dr. Jameson's to carry out his long-cherished plan, irrespective of all other considerations, that ruined the whole conspiracy, drove Mr. Rhodes from power, paralysed the Uitlander movement, and led to a situation in South Africa which ultimately culminated in war.

The letter of invitation.

Towards the end of November Dr. Jameson visited Johannesburg again, and it was finally arranged that he should start simultaneously with the outbreak at Johannesburg, but only upon receiving word from the Reformers. He at the same time obtained from the leaders an undated letter drafted by Mr. Charles Leonard setting forth briefly the

justification of the revolution and appealing to him for aid, in the following words:—

JOHANNESBURG.

DEAR SIR,—

The position of matters in this state has become so critical that we are assured that at no distant period there will be a conflict between the Government and the Uitlander population. It is scarcely necessary for us to recapitulate what is now matter of history; suffice it to say that the position of thousands of Englishmen and others is rapidly becoming intolerable. Not satisfied with making the Uitlander population pay virtually the whole of the revenue of the country while denying them representation, the policy of the Government has been steadily to encroach upon the liberty of the subject, and to undermine the security for property to such an extent as to cause a very deep-seated sense of discontent and danger. A foreign corporation of Hollanders is to a considerable extent controlling our destinies, and in conjunction with the Boer leaders endeavouring to cast them in a mould which is wholly foreign to the genius of the people. Every public act betrays the most positive hostility not only to everything English, but to the neighbouring states.

Well, in short, the internal policy of the Government is such as to have roused into antagonism to it, not only practically the whole body of Uitlanders, but a large number of the Boers; while its external policy has exasperated the neighbouring states, causing the possibility of great danger to the peace and independence of this Republic. Public feeling is in a condition of smouldering discontent. All the petitions of the people have been refused with a greater or less degree of contempt; and in the debate on the Franchise petition, signed by nearly forty thousand people, one member challenged the Uitlanders to fight for the rights they asked for, and not a single member spoke against him. Not to go into details, we may say that the Government has called into existence all the elements necessary for armed conflict. The one desire of the people here is for fair play, the maintenance of their independence, and the preservation of those public liberties without which life is not worth living. The Government denies these things, and violates the national sense of Englishmen at every turn.

What we have to consider is, what will be the condition of things here in the event of a conflict? Thousands of unarmed

men, women, and children of our race will be at the mercy of well-armed Boers, while property of enormous value will be in the greatest peril. We cannot contemplate the future without the gravest apprehensions. All feel that we are justified in taking any steps to prevent the shedding of blood, and to insure the protection of our rights.

It is under these circumstances that we feel constrained to call upon you to come to our aid,* should a disturbance arise here. The circumstances are so extreme that we cannot but believe that you and the men under you will not fail to come to the rescue of people who will be so situated. We guarantee any expense that may reasonably be incurred by you in helping us, and ask you to believe that nothing but the sternest necessity has prompted this appeal.

CHARLES LEONARD.
LIONEL PHILLIPS.
FRANCIS RHODES.
JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.
GEORGE FARRAR.

Objects of the letter. The unjustifiable use made of it.

The letter was to be used privately in order to protect Jameson if called to account by the directors of the Chartered Company or by the Imperial authorities. Under these circumstances the premeditation of the appeal was quite natural and added nothing to the character of the plot. The letter itself was couched in perfectly moderate language. Even the famous phrase about women and children, of which so much has been made, contained nothing more than a reference to the possibility of street fighting in Johannesburg or of the town being shelled by Boer artillery. That an ignorant public in England largely interpreted it as meaning that the Boers would be likely to indulge in wholesale massacres, can hardly be laid as a charge against the Reform Committee. Nor can that body be held responsible for the inspired doggerel of a poet laureate. But whatever the character of the letter, nothing can justify the use made of it when Dr. Jameson started without the knowledge and

* When the letter was first published in *The Times*, the fullstop was put after "aid" instead of after "here," a natural interpretation of the telegram confirmed by the false date at the head, but one seriously affecting the sense of the message.

against the express wish of the signatories. Still less can it justify the disgraceful deception by which Dr. Harris inserted the date December 28 when cabling the letter to *The Times* as a message just received from the Reform leaders. That deception completely altered the whole character of the letter, and its subsequent exposure only reflected upon the unfortunate Uitlander community the discredit due to the scheming secretary of the Chartered Company.

Difficulties and delays. The flag question.

During the next few weeks arms were smuggled in through the agency of De Beers concealed in coal trucks and oil drums. But the arming proved slow work. The Reformers themselves began to feel a little doubtful about the success of the scheme as arranged, and were determined, at any rate, to delay its execution till more arms were introduced and till they could get up to the Rand a certain number of determined men who had seen fighting and could form the nucleus of a revolutionary force. A further difficulty that cropped up was the flag question. The High Commissioner's intervention was undoubtedly part of the scheme as agreed upon between the Reform leaders and Mr. Rhodes, but only to secure reasonable concessions for the Uitlanders without the necessity of actual civil war. The annexation of the Republic was no part of the original scheme, and would have been keenly resented by many of the Reformers themselves. Accordingly when rumours began to spread that Dr. Jameson and others were talking freely about the hoisting of the Union Jack, the Reformers grew restive, and express assurances were demanded and received from Cape Town that no attack upon the independence of the Republic was contemplated. The outbreak of the revolution was postponed to January 4. Many of the Reformers regarded the Jameson alliance part of the scheme as a doubtful advantage, and now declared themselves in favour of dispensing with it altogether, continuing instead as speedily as possible with the importation of arms and the organising of a revolutionary force in Johannesburg. One last demand should then be made to the Volksraad for reasonable redress of grievances; upon its inevitable refusal the Uitlanders should rise in arms and appeal to the Imperial Government for intervention. That

was undoubtedly the better plan, morally, politically and strategically.

Jameson alarmed. Takes the bit in his teeth.

Unfortunately the Reformers had already put themselves at the mercy of Dr. Jameson, who was now burning with impatience to carry out his cherished project. Misled by his own previous successes against the Matabele, he imagined that a handful of his mounted irregulars were more than a match for any force the Boers could bring together against him before he got to the Rand. He feared that the Reformers were growing faint-hearted and would give up the revolution altogether. At the same time he had received indications that Kruger was beginning to get suspicious of the presence of his force, and he was determined to precipitate the crisis before those suspicions were followed by active precautions. Accordingly, in spite of the strongest messages from the Reformers and from Mr. Rhodes, to wait until matters were properly arranged, in spite of special messengers sent from Johannesburg to urge him to have patience, he "took the bit between his teeth" and on the night of Sunday, December 29, invaded the Transvaal with 494 men, 8 maxims and 3 light field-pieces. Before starting he cut the telegraph wires to the Cape to prevent any message ordering his recall to reach him. The far more important precaution of cutting the wires to Pretoria failed, owing to the drunkenness of the two troopers to whom the task had been assigned.

Kruger suspicious. Waits for the tortoise to put out its head.

President Kruger certainly was beginning to get suspicious. Never was there a conspiracy so openly proclaimed on the house-tops as this Johannesburg revolution. By the end of December everybody in Johannesburg knew that some movement was afoot. The old President went for a short tour through the country warning his burghers of the impending trouble. He thus quietly strengthened his hands and awaited events. As he told a meeting of his burghers at Bronkhorst Spruit, on December 26, he would have to wait for the tortoise to stick out its head before he could kill it. But, even to Kruger, the sudden incursion of Dr. Jameson came as a complete surprise. For a moment the Boers seemed paralysed; then the President's coolness and vigour

rallied them. From every side the burghers flocked together to intercept Jameson's advance. At Doornkop, near Krugersdorp, almost at the gates of Johannesburg, Dr. Jameson and his little band were finally surrounded, on January 2, and, after a determined attempt to break their way through, surrendered to Commandant Cronje on the condition that their lives should be spared.

Stupefaction of the Uitlanders. They resolve to bluff and negotiate. The Reform Committee.

The news of Dr. Jameson's incursion, in defiance of every instruction from Johannesburg or Cape Town, and in violation of every pledge given to the Reformers, fell among the Reformers like a thunderbolt. They were absolutely unprepared. Of the promised five thousand rifles, not three thousand had been smuggled in. Dr. Jameson's action had destroyed all hope of seizing the arsenal at Pretoria, a point considered by most of the Reformers absolutely vital to the success of the revolution. The postponement of the great National Union meeting had not even given the leaders an opportunity for bringing the community, as a whole, to the point of action. At their best their preparations were only intended to terrify the Boers, and enable Johannesburg to hold its own till the Imperial Government should intervene. But such as they were when Dr. Jameson crossed the border they were inadequate even for the purposes of bluff. The Reformers had every reason to consider themselves betrayed. Yet they could not repudiate their confederate. The plot had gone too far for that. They did what was, perhaps, the only thing to do under the circumstances—distribute such arms as they had, and endeavour to intimidate the Boer Government into negotiating for reasonable terms, while themselves remaining on the defensive awaiting Dr. Jameson's arrival and the intervention of the High Commissioner. The formal disclaimer of any knowledge of Dr. Jameson's action, and the hoisting of the "Vierkleur," were obvious consequences of the policy thus adopted—on no other basis would negotiation with the Transvaal have been possible. The Transvaal police had been withdrawn by the Government to avoid precipitating an outbreak, and the administration of the town was left entirely in the hands of the Reform

Committee, a body which was first formally constituted on December 30.

Alarm of the Boers. They hold out the olive-branch.

The Boers were undoubtedly terrified by the suddenness with which the Raid and the Johannesburg revolution had been sprung upon them, and while their terror lasted were quite ready to discuss terms with the Uitlanders. Two of the most moderate men in the Boer ranks—Messrs. Eugene Marais and Malan—were sent over to Johannesburg to "hold out the olive-branch," and to suggest that the Reformers should send over a deputation to discuss their grievances with the Government. On New Year's Day the deputation, consisting of Mr. Lionel Phillips, the Chairman of the Reform Committee, and Messrs. Auret, Bailey, and Langermann, went to Pretoria, and, after discussion with a commission appointed to confer with them, returned to Johannesburg with an answer from the Executive Council to the effect that the South African Republic had accepted the High Commissioner's offer of mediation, that, pending his arrival, no hostile action would be taken against Johannesburg, provided Johannesburg took no action against the Government, and that grievances would be earnestly considered. It has been asserted that, in consenting to this arrangement, the Committee betrayed Dr. Jameson. Such a version of their action is entirely unfair. From a military point of view they were helpless, and could have done nothing to aid Dr. Jameson. Their only hope of coming to terms with the Boers, and of securing the High Commissioner's intervention, lay in their completely dissociating themselves from Jameson's rash enterprise. The deputation assured the Government that Dr. Jameson must have started owing to some misconception, and offered the persons of the Reform Committee as hostages for his immediate peaceful departure. When the British Agent, Sir Jacobus de Wet, sent out the message from Sir Hercules Robinson ordering Dr. Jameson to return at once, he was accompanied by an envoy from the Reformers sent to explain the arrangement with the Government, and to urge Dr. Jameson to follow the High Commissioner's orders.

Johannesburg was not alone in its consternation at the

news of the Raid. To Mr. Rhodes, Dr. Jameson's rash act meant not only the failure of the whole scheme for overthrowing President Kruger's Government, but the probable ruin of his own career, the "upsetting of his apple-cart." Dr. Jameson's telegram, sent on the morning of Sunday the 29th, announcing his resolve to cross the border that very night, reached Mr. Rhodes the same afternoon, but all efforts to get a reply through to Mafeking failed in the absence of the operators. When he found Dr. Jameson had actually gone, Mr. Rhodes made no further effort to stop him, hoping against hope that the mad venture might yet, after all, succeed. He did all in his power to dissuade the High Commissioner from publishing the proclamation declaring Dr. Jameson an outlaw. He urged him to visit Pretoria immediately. At the same time he acquiesced in Dr. Rutherfoord Harris's cabling the letter of invitation to *The Times*. Mr. Rhodes, however, was not responsible for the scandalous trickery by which Dr. Harris inserted the date of December 28 at the head of the letter, in the hope of inducing the British public to believe that the Raid had been provoked by a rising at Johannesburg. Mr. Rhodes' motives in acting as he did are not hard to understand. He was so deeply involved in the whole plot that Dr. Jameson's action could not but compromise him whatever course he pursued. Nor could he bring it over his heart to ruin his old associate by openly abandoning him. As he said to Mr. Schreiner on that memorable 30th of December: "Poor old Jameson! Twenty years we have been friends, and now he goes and ruins me. I cannot hinder him. I cannot go and destroy him."

The upsetting of Mr. Rhodes' apple-cart.

But there were others who had less cause for indecision. Sir Hercules Robinson at once, on receipt of the news, telegraphed to Mr. Newton, the magistrate at Mafeking, and to the British Agent at Pretoria, to use every means in their power to stop Dr. Jameson. At Mr. Hofmeyr's suggestion he followed up his telegrams by a proclamation ordering Dr. Jameson to retire immediately from the Transvaal, and calling upon all British subjects in the South African Republic to abstain from giving him any

The High Commissioner's proclamation. Mr. Chamberlain's prompt action.

assistance. Mr. Chamberlain was no less prompt. A suspicion of the possibility of a movement on the part of the Chartered Company's forces had reached him even before the Raid took place, and, by a curious coincidence, he despatched a cable drawing the High Commissioner's attention to the matter at the very moment that Dr. Jameson's force was mustering preparatory to crossing the frontier. The telegram went on to instruct the High Commissioner to caution Mr. Rhodes that, if anything of the sort took place, he would not only lose Mr. Chamberlain's support, but would endanger the whole position of the Chartered Company. Sir Hercules Robinson replied that he heard upon good authority that internal dissensions had led to the complete collapse of the Reform movement. Answering immediately, Mr. Chamberlain repeated his question as to Jameson. Within a few minutes of the despatch of this message came telegrams from Sir Hercules Robinson giving information of the Raid and of the steps he had taken to repudiate the act. Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed the same evening cordially approving this action, and again next day condemning Dr. Jameson's action in the strongest terms as an act of filibustering and marauding, and suggesting further steps to stop him. At the same time Mr. Chamberlain wrote to the British South Africa Company calling upon them to reverse the proceedings of Dr. Jameson and warning them of the risk of revocation of their Charter if they should prove to have set Dr. Jameson in motion or to have been privy to the Raid. During the two days which elapsed before the news of Dr. Jameson's surrender reached London Mr. Chamberlain continued to take all possible steps to repudiate and discountenance the Raid and to prevent its being supported from Bulawayo, whence it was rumoured that a column of 1000 men was preparing to start.

His action incompatible with complicity in the Raid.

His action was entirely incompatible with any complicity in the Raid. For all he knew, Johannesburg had risen in arms and was able to defend itself, and for all he knew, Jameson was almost certain to have got through in safety. If he had been privy to the Raid he would have done what Mr. Rhodes did, and what many another in Mr.

Chamberlain's place, equally innocent, but less strong-minded and clear-headed, might have done—temporised in the hope that Jameson might succeed, and that his success might cover up all that was discreditable in his undertaking. Mr. Chamberlain's case cannot be stated more convincingly than in the words of the eloquent speech made by him in the House of Commons on July 26, 1897:—

"My answer to these anonymous assailants is not in anything I can say. If they do not believe anything that I said before the Committee, they will not believe what I say now. My answer is my action. What happened when the Raid took place? When the suggestion was made to me that the Raid might take place? At that moment I could have no knowledge of what would be the success of the Raid. Many persons about me thought it would be successful, that the revolution in Johannesburg would be successful, and that the assistance that would come to it would add to its success. I had before me what is now known as the "women and children" letter, which expressed the fear that English women and children were in danger in Johannesburg. I had no reason whatever to doubt the authenticity of that letter; and I did not know, and none of my advisers knew, that the thing contemplated in that letter might not take place. I had the advice of many persons—I am not speaking officially—interested in South Africa, who called upon me to hold my hand, and I had every excuse for holding my hand. I was alone in London: I had no communication with my colleagues: I had to act at a moment's notice: and I did act, in spite of all the temptations to refrain, in spite of the doubts in my own mind, because I felt that the act of Dr. Jameson was wrong, and therefore I felt, as a minister of the Crown, that I was bound to repudiate it. Is that consistent with these scandalous accusations? It is impossible to suppose, if you think me such a fool, that any English minister could be such a knave as to do what is attributed to me, that I could have taken this step by myself, and in the circumstances described to the House if I had known about it, was myself a party to the Raid, and approved the policy of which the Raid was a part. That is the state of the case, and I am content to rest it there, and I have always been so content."

The Kaiser's telegram.

Mr. Chamberlain was not alone in showing promptitude in telegraphing. On January 3 the whole world was

startled by the news that the German Emperor had, with the consent of his advisers, sent the following amazing telegram to President Kruger—

"I express to you my sincere congratulations that without appealing to the help of friendly Powers you and your people have succeeded in repelling with your own forces the armed bands which had broken into your country and in maintaining the independence of your country against foreign aggression."

A few days later it became known that there had been an attempt to get Portuguese consent for the sending of a body of German marines to Pretoria—in other words, for a deliberate raid upon the British sphere of paramountcy—and there are even good grounds for believing that the German Government attempted to secure the co-operation of other Powers for a joint intervention in Transvaal affairs. The telegram raised a whirlwind of indignation in England, and a Flying Squadron was promptly mobilised to make it clear to Germany that any attempt at interference would mean an outbreak of hostilities. Even in America, where President Cleveland's discourteous despatch on the Venezuelan question had appealed to anti-British sentiment, the news of the German Emperor's action evoked manifestations of sympathy for the British people. The telegram served a useful purpose, for it made the British public realise that, in defiance of the London Convention, the Transvaal had carried on a series of underground negotiations with the European Powers, while the indignation the telegram provoked in England made it clear to Germany and to all Europe that the nation would stand no interference in South African affairs. On the other hand it caused much mischief at the moment by diverting attention from the real issue of Transvaal misgovernment, and by leading to a mistaken "music-hall" glorification of Jameson and the Raiders as champions of England against German-Boer intrigues.

On Thursday, January 2, the High Commissioner, having received a telegram from President Kruger accepting his offer of mediation, left Cape Town for Pretoria, where he arrived on January 4. He found the Boers triumphant

after their success over Dr. Jameson, and intensely excited. They were eager to attack and destroy Johannesburg, and were clamouring loudly for Dr. Jameson's execution. As regards Johannesburg, President Kruger informed him that unconditional submission must precede any discussion of grievances. The terms of Jameson's surrender were withheld from the High Commissioner. Knowing how helpless Johannesburg was, Sir Hercules Robinson urged the Reformers to lay down their arms, thus making himself morally responsible for the consequences of their submission. It would be too long a task to enter into the details of the negotiations between Sir H. Robinson and the Uitlander leaders mainly carried on through Sir J. de Wet. But there is no doubt that the Uitlanders laid down their arms in the belief that they were thereby saving the lives of Dr. Jameson and his men, that their personal liberty would not be interfered with, and that their grievances would be redressed. On the 9th and 10th the members of the Reform Committee, to the number of about sixty, were arrested on a charge of high treason, and on the 14th the High Commissioner left Pretoria, having secured the handing over of Dr. Jameson and his associates to be tried and punished by the Imperial Government, and having made no attempt to secure anything besides. The Uitlanders and the Reform leaders were simply left in the lurch. Mr. Chamberlain was greatly perplexed on receiving the High Commissioner's cable that he was returning to Cape Town, a cable containing not a single reference to redress of grievances or to the arrest of the Reformers, points on which Mr. Chamberlain had throughout insisted in the strongest terms. His telegram of January 4, in which he urged the Uitlanders' claim to sympathy, has already been quoted from. In the same telegram he added—

The High Commissioner at Pretoria. Induces Uitlanders to lay down arms and then returns.

Mr. Chamberlain eager to secure redress of Uitlander grievances.

"I am aware that victory of Transvaal Government over Administrator of Mashonaland may possibly find them not willing to make any concessions. If this is the attitude they adopt, they will, in my opinion, make a great mistake; for danger from which they have just escaped was real, and one which, if the

causes which led up to it are not removed, may recur though in a different form." *

Despatch of Jan. 13.

This telegram was followed by another of 13th January, again urging concessions to prevent the danger of internal disturbance, and stating the relation of Great Britain to the Transvaal in the clearest possible language.

"There is a possibility that the President might be induced to rely on the support of some foreign Power in resisting the grant of reforms or in making demands upon Her Majesty's Government; and in view of this *I think it well to inform you that Great Britain will resist at all costs the interference of any foreign Power in the affairs of the South African Republic.* The suggestion that such interference was contemplated by Germany was met in this country by an unprecedented and unanimous outburst of public feeling.

"In order to be prepared for all eventualities, it has been thought desirable by Her Majesty's Government to commission a Flying Squadron of powerful men-of-war, with twelve torpedo-ships; and many other vessels are held in reserve.

"Her Majesty's Government have no reason, at the present moment, to anticipate any conflict of interest with foreign Powers; but I think it right for you to know that Great Britain will not tolerate any change in her relations with the Republic, and that, while loyally respecting its internal independence, subject to the Conventions, *she will maintain her position as the Paramount Power in South Africa*, and especially the provisions of Article IV. of the Convention of 1884.

"It is my sincere hope that President Kruger, who has hitherto shown so much wisdom in dealing with the situation, will now take the opportunity afforded to him of making of his own free will such reasonable concessions to the Uitlanders as will remove the last excuse for disloyalty, and will establish the free institutions of the Republic on a firm and lasting basis.

"You will recollect that promises have before been made to the Uitlanders, which unfortunately have not been fulfilled. I trust the President will now see his way to repeat these promises to you as the Representative of the Paramount Power; and in this case he may rely upon the sincere friendship of Her Majesty's

C. 7933, p. 19.

"THE JOHANNESBURG REFORM COMMITTEE."

COL. FRANK RHODES, D.S.O.
From Photo by Elliott & Fry.

MR. GEORGE FARRAR.
From Photo by Duffus Bros., Johannesburg.

MR. J. PERCY FITZPATRICK
(SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE).
From Photo by Elliott & Fry.

MR. LIONEL PHILLIPS.
From Photo by Goch, Johannesburg.

MR. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.
From Photo by Elliott & Fry

Printed by The Rembrandt Intaglio Printing Co., Ld.

Government, and on their determination that all external action against the independence of the Republic shall be prevented." *

The first of these telegrams was sent at a time when the British representative held strong cards in his hands. Johannesburg had not yet laid down its arms, and was supposed to be much more powerful than was really the case. The second telegram was sent after the people of Johannesburg had laid down their arms, "placing themselves and their interests unreservedly in the hands of the British Commissioner, in the fullest confidence that he would see justice done to them," † and while the High Commissioner was still believed to be in Pretoria.

When Mr. Chamberlain saw, from the tone of Sir H. Robinson's despatches, that he was eager to do nothing, he again, on January 15, sent an urgent message, which, however, was too late to be of any effect— Urgent despatch of Jan. 15 too late.

"The people of Johannesburg laid down their arms in the belief that reasonable concessions would be arranged by your intervention, and until these are granted, or definitely promised you by the President, the root-causes of the recent troubles will remain. The President has again and again promised reform, and especially on the 30th December last, when he promised reforms in education and franchise, and grave dissatisfaction would be excited if you left Pretoria without a clear understanding on these points. Her Majesty's Government invite President Kruger, in the interests of the South African Republic and of peace, to make a full declaration on these matters. I am also awaiting a reply respecting the alleged wholesale arrest of English, American, and other nationalities, made after the surrender of Johannesburg. It will be your duty to use firm language, and to tell the President that neglect to meet the admitted grievances of the Uitlanders, by giving a definite promise to propose reasonable concessions, would have a disastrous effect upon the prospects of a lasting and satisfactory settlement."

Sir Hercules simply replied that he considered any such action inopportune at the time, but might resume advocacy

* C. 7933, p. 51.

† Sir Hercules Robinson to Mr. Chamberlain, January 7, 1896.

Disastrous effects of Sir H. Robinson's weakness.

of the Uitlanders' claims at a later date. He deprecated any attempt to dictate in regard to the internal affairs of the Republic as likely to precipitate a conflict. In other words, he completely abandoned the intervention for which he had expressly come up to Pretoria. Looking back with a fuller knowledge of circumstances one cannot but think that the right course for a strong man in Sir Hercules Robinson's place would have been to have devoted all his energies to securing for the Uitlanders a definite guarantee of reform, and, if necessary, to have left Dr. Jameson and his associates to any fate to which President Kruger might think fit to assign them. It is in the highest degree improbable that Dr. Jameson would have been shot in violation of the promise given by Cronje. But in any case it was no concern of the Imperial Government to try and save him from the consequences of his actions. To Jameson himself and his companions, English gentlemen who had embarked on their rash project with a full knowledge of the risks they were facing, it can have been no kindness to find that all the great interests, Imperial and South African, for which they had, in however mistaken and even criminal a fashion, endangered their lives and their positions, were sacrificed to the one end of sheltering them from the consequences of their failure. But the High Commissioner's weakness not only ruined the Uitlanders, and missed the psychological moment for intervention, without even benefitting the one set of people who had least claim for his consideration, but it also distorted the whole character of the Transvaal crisis in the eyes of the world, by giving the Raid and the Raiders an exaggerated prominence which they did not really possess. If Sir Hercules Robinson had insisted on a full discussion and definite settlement of the Uitlander grievances before quitting Pretoria, the Raid would have sunk back to its proper level as a reprehensible act, deserving the severest penalties but of no great consequence as compared with the question of reform in the Transvaal. By dropping everything else and pleading for the Raiders, the High Commissioner made the Raid all in all, and enabled Kruger to identify the British Government with the Raid. The advantage thus

given him Kruger and his sympathisers used to the full. The Raid, provoked by the misgovernment of the Transvaal and by its armaments, was made to serve as a justification of worse misgovernment to follow and of enormously increased military expenditure. By not asserting his just claims the High Commissioner put the Imperial Government in the wrong, and within a month of Sir Hercules Robinson's departure from Pretoria Kruger thought the Raid justified him in demanding the abolition of the London Convention. The enormous effect the Raid had upon all South African politics was far more due to the use that Kruger was able to make of it, owing to the High Commissioner's mistake, than to its own intrinsic importance.

Excuses to be urged for Sir H. Robinson.

It may, however, be urged in defence of Sir H. Robinson's conduct, firstly that he was very ill at the time and mentally and physically quite incapable of a determined diplomatic conflict with President Kruger; and further that he was so deeply shocked by the evidence of prearrangement for the combined Raid and Revolution shown him by the Boer authorities that his feelings underwent a complete revulsion against the Uitlanders, and that he thus failed entirely to realise the responsibility he had assumed towards them by asking them to disarm. The first effect of the discovery of the whole correspondence between the Reformers and the confederates, which together with the key to the cipher had been found on the field of Doornkop in Major "Bobby" White's despatch-box, was undoubtedly to prejudice public opinion against the Uitlanders. The romantic character of Dr. Jameson's buccaneering exploit, and the exaggerated stories current of the gallantry shown by the Raiders at Doornkop, for the moment occupied the mind of the majority of Englishmen in South Africa as well as in England, to the exclusion of any more sensible judgment of the real political situation. A petition was got up by the *Cape Times* and widely signed, praying the High Commissioner to treat the release of Dr. Jameson and his colleagues as of more importance than any other conditions which the South African Republic should be asked to grant. The Reform Committee themselves when calling upon the Uitlanders to lay down

their arms declared that the safety of Dr. Jameson and his men should be the first consideration. Even Mr. Chamberlain felt himself obliged, in view of the state of public feeling in England, to lay more stress upon the safety of the Raiders than was either dignified or politic, and by his appeal to President Kruger's magnanimity put the latter into a position the advantages of which he well knew how to make use of. There seems little doubt that the High Commissioner, like almost everybody else at that time, was inclined to look upon Jameson as a misguided but gallant man sacrificed to the vacillation of a crowd of money-grubbers who had schemed and plotted for a revolution but had at the critical moment lacked the heart to carry it out. Mr. Rhodes, whom the collapse of Johannesburg touched more nearly than anyone else, was at the time almost alone in saying a good word for the Uitlanders—"The Johannesburg people are not cowards; they were rushed."

The case for the Uitlanders.

The Reform leaders were perhaps not men of heroic mould, nor was the Uitlander population capable of sudden desperate valour any more than the population of any other large industrial centre. But it is difficult to see what else they could have done under the circumstances, short of a desperate attack upon Pretoria or a march to help Jameson's advance, for both of which operations they were utterly unprepared. Both leaders and men have since then shown on many a hard-fought field the sterling material that exists to-day, as it existed in 1896, in the English-speaking population of the Rand. The fate of the Uitlander leaders was an unenviable one. Their revolution had been ruined by Dr. Jameson's precipitancy, they had surrendered their arms to save Dr. Jameson's life on what they conceived to be a distinct understanding that certain reforms would be granted them, and that their persons should not be touched, and now they found themselves betrayed by the High Commissioner, and left to Kruger's tender mercies without anyone to say a single good word on their behalf. They were arrested and lodged in gaol as felons. They were tried in the end of April, most of them having been admitted to bail in the

interval, and sentenced, the four signatories * of the letter of invitation, Colonel Frank Rhodes, Messrs. Phillips, Farrar, and Hammond, to death, and the rest to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £2000 each, or in default, a further year's imprisonment, in either case followed by three years' banishment. The death sentences were almost immediately commuted to fifteen years' imprisonment. The trial of the Reformers had been generally looked upon as a more or less formal matter, and the news of the verdict caused general consternation throughout South Africa. Owing to the exertions of Mr. Rose Innes, who had watched the trial on behalf of the Imperial Government, a petition for the release of the prisoners was got up in every town in South Africa, and the mayors of over two hundred towns, including the towns of the Free State, went to Pretoria to present the petition to the President. After protracted haggling, which robbed magnanimity of much of its grace, the prisoners were released. The conditions were that they should pay their fines at once and bind themselves for three years to take no part in politics. The four leaders had to pay £25,000 each and abstain from politics for fifteen years, or undergo fifteen years' banishment. There remained two of the prisoners, Messrs. Woolls-Sampson and "Karri" Davies, who, with truly British obstinacy, refused to sign any petition for commutation of their sentences, as a protest against the breach of faith committed by the Transvaal Government in arresting them, and by the Imperial Government in allowing that arrest to take place. They were, after thirteen months' imprisonment, released on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee.

Trial and sentence of the Reform leaders. The mayors' petition. Constancy of Messrs. Sampson and Davies.

* Mr. Charles Leonard had gone to England.

CHAPTER VIII

THREE YEARS OF CONTROVERSY

Kruger's opportunity.

ONCE again had good fortune saved President Kruger when on the very verge of ruin. No conceivable combination of circumstances could have brought about so complete a rehabilitation of himself and his policy as the Jameson Raid and the events which followed. Dr. Jameson had, by one act of supreme folly, won back for the President the confidence of his burghers, crushed the resistance of the Uitlanders, and dissipated all prospects of future revolt; put out of court and almost ruined Kruger's one great political opponent; hopelessly embarrassed the Imperial Government; and fanned into fierce flame throughout all Afrikanderdom the hatred of England which for the last ten years had gradually been falling to sleep. For a moment it seemed as if Kruger really intended to rise to the height of the occasion. During the stormy week that followed Dr. Jameson's invasion, the President showed a resourcefulness, calmness, and self-control that cannot but claim admiration. He fenced with Johannesburg—which for all he could know was armed to the teeth—while he concentrated all his energies on stopping the Raiders. When Dr. Jameson was in his hands, and the weakness of Johannesburg was discovered, he stretched his influence almost to the breaking point in opposing the clamour of his burghers for immediate revenge. He knew well what the consequences of such a revenge would be, and he was determined to give the Imperial Government no pretext for intervention. When Sir Hercules Robinson returned to Cape Town the President had given away nothing but the lives of the Raiders, and a vague promise to "forgive and forget" and grant reforms to the

Uitlanders as soon as the occasion should arise. The best public opinion in England and among Englishmen in South Africa was anxious to make reparation for the Raid, and the slightest indications of a conciliatory and statesmanlike spirit would have been welcomed with effusive joy. But it was useless to hope for statesmanship as distinct from cunning and determination from the old Dopper leader. The Raid and the Uitlander revolution taught him no lesson, they only confirmed him in his hatred of the Imperial Government and of the Uitlanders, and in his resolve to pursue with greater energy and greater outlay of money the policy which had almost shipwrecked his State. The arrest of the Reform leaders created a profound shock among English South Africans. The circumstances attending their trial and condemnation, the haggling that preceded their release, only served to show the Transvaal Government in an unfavourable light. Towards the Imperial Government Mr. Kruger maintained an attitude which reduced negotiation almost to a farce.

Mr. Chamberlain still hopes to secure redress of Uitlander grievances. Kruger's projected visit to England.

In spite of Sir Hercules Robinson's failure, Mr. Chamberlain did not despair altogether in January of still securing speedy redress of the Uitlander grievances by conciliatory representations. It was privately represented to him by men whose information was likely to be correct that an invitation to President Kruger to visit London and discuss pending questions would certainly be accepted and lead to positive results. The same suggestion was made by the Cape Ministry, though the despatch containing their views was not received till after the invitation had been sent. On January 27 Mr. Chamberlain formally directed the High Commissioner to invite the President. The idea of the visit to London in all probability emanated directly from Kruger himself. He had visited London three times already on behalf of the independence of the Republic, and on his last visit had gained almost all he had wanted. There only remained a few restrictions, of which Art. IV., submitting the foreign relations of the Transvaal to British control, was the most important. Now that the Raid had supplied him with a good substantial grievance to bargain with, he hoped to

get rid of these also and attain his object of rendering the Transvaal absolutely independent. His disappointment when he found that the invitation expressly excluded the discussion of Art. IV. was great. His reply of February 25, after a month's delay, was in form an acceptance of the invitation, but upon terms quite inconsistent with the offer. It laid down as a condition that "the Government could tolerate no interference in its internal relations, and the official discussion of affairs with the object of requiring changes will have to be avoided," and stated as the chief point for discussion—

Kruger demands the supersession of the London Convention.

"The superseding of the Convention of London, with the eye, amongst others, on the violation of the territory of the South African Republic; because in several respects it has already ceased to exist; because in other respects it has no more cause for existence; because it is injurious to the dignity of an Independent Republic; because the very name and the continual arguments on the question of suzerainty which, since the conclusion of this Convention, no longer exists, are used as a pretext, especially by a libellous press, for wilfully inciting both white and coloured people against the lawful authority of the Republic. . . . In the discussion of the withdrawal of the Convention as a whole, Art. IV. should naturally not be kept back." *

As a substitute for the Convention he offered a treaty of peace, commerce and friendship, by which the interests of England should be placed on the footing of the most favoured nation. In other words, Kruger claimed that it was time for the relations established by the Convention to come formally to an end, on the ground that he had already played fast and loose with the Convention, and that it was derogatory to the independent dignity to which the Republic aspired. The further ground given, that he wanted to stop the mouths of those libellous persons who maintained that the Convention was still in force, was very characteristic.

Mr. Chamberlain replied in very moderate language. He did not take up the challenge as to suzerainty, but merely repeated that Art. IV. of the London Convention would

* C. 8063, p. 18.

require to form a part of any new convention or treaty. At the same time he offered "as part of a general settlement to give a complete guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty's Government to the South African Republic against any attack upon its independence either from within any part of British dominions or from the territory of a foreign State." * In reply the Transvaal Government rejected this offer of a guarantee. They expressed their regret that Her Majesty's Government had not acceded to their desire to reconsider the Convention, and stated that if this could not be obtained they would "as the aggrieved and injured party prefer to content themselves with the postponement of the question." † Mr. Chamberlain's further suggestion of a "modified local autonomy, with powers of legislation on purely local questions, and subject to the veto of the President and Executive Council," ‡ for the Rand, in place of Mr. Kruger's farcical Municipal Law, was likewise rejected.

Mr. Chamberlain offers to guarantee independence. Suggests scheme of local autonomy for Rand.

The attitude assumed by the Transvaal Government left no room for further negotiation. The situation was dangerously strained and the necessity of sending an ultimatum to the Transvaal was openly talked of. No doubt it would have been possible to formulate an ultimatum containing the proposals in favour of the Uitlanders contained in Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of February 4, 1896, § but that ultimatum would certainly have been rejected and must have led to war. As to the nature of that war the Government were under no illusion. In words that have often been quoted Mr. Chamberlain told the House of Commons on May 8, 1896—

Relations seriously strained. British Government resolved to do everything to avoid war.

"A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars that could possibly be waged. It would be in the nature of a civil war. It would be a long war, a bitter war, and a costly war, and, as I have pointed out already, it would leave behind it the embers of a strife which I believe generations would be hardly long enough to extinguish. Of course there might be contingencies in which a great power has to face—even such an alternative as this . . . if some of those wild rumours which

* C. 8063, p. 9.
† C. 8423, pp. 16, 17.
‡ C. 7933, p. 83.
§ C. 7933, p. 83.

attributed to President Kruger a design to break the Convention should prove true."

Of the necessity of such a war, neither the Government nor the nation was convinced. The psychological moment for pressing reforms had been missed when Johannesburg was allowed to lay down its arms without conditions, and during the remainder of the tenure of office by Sir Hercules Robinson it did not recur. The Government, conscious though it was of its moral obligation to the Uitlanders, felt that for the present it was necessary to subordinate all other matters to the endeavour to restore better relations with the Transvaal without yielding any of the rights contained in the London Convention. When more cordial relations were restored it might be possible to make representations. Meanwhile everything was done to allay Boer suspicions. The movements of British troops in connection with the Matabele war in the spring and summer of 1896 were carefully notified to the Transvaal. To this policy also belong those attempts at a personal conciliation of the old President, most quoted of which was Mr. Chamberlain's inquiry after the health of Mrs. Kruger.

Aggressive attitude of the Transvaal. Aliens Expulsion Act. Other attempts to bring the Convention into disuse.

Unfortunately the policy of the Transvaal was not merely unconciliatory and distrustful; it soon showed itself openly defiant and aggressive. President Kruger was determined to convert into fact his assertion that the London Convention had virtually ceased to exist. In the summer of 1896 an Expulsion of Aliens Act was passed in spite of the protest of Mr. Chamberlain that the law was inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the London Convention. Attempts were made to cut down the agreement made under the previous Government between Sir Henry Loch and President Kruger in respect of commandeering, and to limit its application to white persons in place of the original assurance which covered all British subjects, white or coloured.* Repeated efforts were made to evade the express requirements of Art. IV. of the London Convention as to the submission of treaties with foreign powers. A variety of such treaties,

* C. 8423, p. 62.

harmless and unobjectionable in themselves, were withheld from submission on different technical pretexts, the common link between all these cases being the clear intention of bringing the provision of the Convention into disuse.*

The Aliens Immigration Act. Mr. Chamberlain's Ultimatum, March 1897.

In November, 1896, an Aliens Immigration Act, laying severe restrictions on the entrance of foreigners to the Transvaal, was passed by the Volksraad. Mr. Chamberlain at once objected that this law infringed Art. XIV. of the London Convention, inasmuch as by it new and burdensome conditions, in most cases probably impossible to fulfil, were imposed on persons who, under the Convention, were at full liberty to enter and reside in the South African Republic on condition of conforming to its laws, and expressed his confidence that no attempt would be made to enforce the law.†

The Transvaal Government refused to comply, basing its refusal on the grounds that the law was a mere police measure. In a peremptory despatch of March 6, 1897,‡ Mr. Chamberlain pointed out that any necessary police measures could have been provided for after arriving at some understanding with Her Majesty's Government, and not by legislation which was in direct conflict with the London Convention, and could be used in such a fashion as to make the entrance or residence of foreigners absolutely impossible, and insisted that the measure should at once be repealed or formally suspended. To make the meaning of the despatch yet plainer, a special squadron was sent to Delagoa Bay.

His protest against the other infringements of the Convention.

In a second despatch of the same date, dealing with the other questions at issue, his attitude was less urgent. After stating the position of the Imperial Government in regard to each of them he summed up the position as follows :—

"In several of the cases above cited the strict letter of the Convention could apparently have been observed without any difficulty, while in others the objects which the Government of the South African Republic had in view could have been attained without any infringement of the Convention by a previous understanding with H.M. Government. H.M. Government therefore cannot conceal from themselves that the Government of the

* C. 8423, p. 71. † C. 8423, p. 67.
‡ C. 8423, p. 113.

South African Republic have in these cases failed to give effect in practice to the intention, so frequently expressed in public and official utterances, of upholding the Convention on the part of the Republic and of maintaining that good understanding with H.M. Government which is so necessary in the interests of South Africa." *

Kruger climbs down. The demand for arbitration.

The reply to Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, covering eight and a half pages of Bluebook,† was thoroughly characteristic of Boer diplomacy. The Transvaal Government began by aggressively declaring that it could not consider the demands of Her Majesty's Government, but went on to state that it had decided for reasons of its own—"among others, that the law as it was formulated and operated at that time contained certain provisions which exposed the citizens and inhabitants of several neighbouring states and colonies, against whom no objection can be raised, to certain inconveniences"—to revoke the law with a view to introducing new legislation. In other words it complied with what was practically an ultimatum, while taking care to "save its face" by a formal refusal and a threat to do the same thing again whenever it thought fit. With regard to Mr. Chamberlain's protest on the other breaches of the Convention, the Transvaal refused to change its course in any way. In regard to them it however proposed the principle of arbitration by an independent authority, suggesting a jurist to be appointed by the President of the Swiss Republic. The object of this proposal was simple enough. Appearance before a neutral foreign court would have formally ratified the claim of the Transvaal to be a "sovereign international state." That would have been enough for the moment. Any unfavourable decision of the court could always subsequently have been repudiated as against the independence of the country. This despatch, which, while opening large questions, satisfactorily closed the immediate matter in dispute, was one of the first papers sent home by Sir Alfred Milner.

Transvaal Bill for the Raid. Kruger's impossible attitude.

In February, 1897, the Transvaal Government presented its claim to compensation for the Raid, in principle admitted by Mr. Chamberlain, but made ridiculous by its extravagance

* C. 8423, p. 117. † C. 8721, p. 6.

as well as by the form in which it was put forward, viz., £677,938 3*s.* 3*d.* for actual outlay, and a round £1,000,000 for "moral and intellectual damages." The policy upon which President Kruger had now decided, and which Dr. Leyds and afterwards Mr. Reitz expounded in their despatches, was simply this: that the Transvaal would listen to no representations made by the Imperial Government, and that if it yielded on any point it was simply because it did not consider the matter worth going to war about. Kruger's triumph over the Raid and the Johannesburg revolution had produced an exaltation of temper, and a defiant arrogance both towards the Imperial Government and towards the Uitlanders, that made war almost inevitable. That war did not come about in 1896 or 1897 was not due to any conciliatory spirit shown by the Transvaal, but to the genuine reluctance felt by the British Government and by the British people to declare war upon a state to which certain Englishmen had done a grievous wrong.

Nationalist excitement in South Africa over Kruger's success.

Throughout South Africa the victory of the Transvaal burghers over Dr. Jameson's force and the complete triumph of President Kruger's policy raised Afrikander nationalist sentiment to a pitch which it had hardly reached even in the period immediately following the retrocession of the Transvaal. Afrikanderdom rejoiced that the Boers had disposed of the much-vaunted Rhodesian troopers in 1896 as easily as they had disposed of the red-coated regulars in 1881, and added Doornkop next to Majuba on the list of its national triumphs. At the critical moment Sir Hercules Robinson had shrunk from taking up a firm attitude on the question of the Uitlander grievances from fear of irritating Dutch nationalist feeling in Cape Colony, just as Mr. Gladstone shrank in 1881, and with the same consequence, that he made worse the evil which he tried to assuage. If Dr. Jameson had succeeded in fighting his way through to Johannesburg, or even if, after his defeat, the High Commissioner had succeeded in securing a reasonable measure of redress for the Uitlanders, passion would never have blazed forth so fiercely in South Africa. More, even, than the indignation at Mr. Rhodes' conspiracy, it was the thrill of exultation over

President Kruger's victory that gave fresh life to ambitions which, except in the Transvaal itself and among a select few outside, had for some years been relegated to future development or had been toyed with rather than seriously prosecuted.

The realisation of the insecure foundation of the Afrikander ideal.

And with that thrill of exultation there was also the realisation of the imminent peril through which the Afrikander cause had passed, and which still faced it in the future. It was the Raid that first clearly brought home to the Afrikander party the fact that the Transvaal, the centre of all their ambitions, the corner-stone of the future edifice of South African independence, was itself in a perilous state, that already the majority of its inhabitants were English, and that Dr. Jameson and his band of moss-troopers had been within an ace of establishing the enemy in power in the very citadel of Afrikanderdom. For the moment Mr. Rhodes' manœuvre had been scotched, but the danger still remained. There were ugly signs, too, that Mr. Chamberlain and the British people were awakening to the anomalous state of affairs in South Africa, and would try and compel the Transvaal to sacrifice its whole nationalist mission by admitting to political power men who had no sympathy with the ideal of freeing South Africa from the British supremacy. Once the magnitude of the issue and the imminence of the danger became clear, the bulk of the Afrikander party became one with President Kruger in his resolve to keep the Uitlanders from power, whatever the cost. It is in this sense that active disloyalty among British subjects can be said to have begun with the Raid. Before that the Afrikander party in Cape Colony had always hoped to secure its end by constitutional means, and had even looked forward to a period of transition during which the Imperial Government, in return for its naval protection, should be allowed to retain the coaling stations of Simon's Town and Durban. The Raid was the occasion upon which Afrikanderdom first saw clearly that, but for President Kruger's suppression of the Uitlanders, normal constitutional development would inevitably give so large a share of power into the hands of the English element that the Dutch national idea would become an empty dream. No temporary constitutional success in Cape Colony could

avert such a calamity if the Imperial Government once succeeded in getting the Uitlanders' claim to a share in the State recognised by the Transvaal Government. And therefore it was essential to thwart the action of the Imperial Government—if possible by intervention on the part of the Free State and by the opposition of a constitutional majority in Cape Colony; failing that, by force of arms. Such expressed in its crudest form was the idea underlying the actions of the more extreme section of the Afrikander party, whether in the Free State or in Cape Colony. From this point of view the bitter struggle over the Cape elections, the readiness of the Free State to plunge into war, the preparations for rebellion in parts of Cape Colony, the actual rebellion and the agitation that have followed, all appear as phases of the same despairing national effort.

Kruger now secures his hold over the Free State. Mr. Steyn President, 1896.

The Orange Free State, which had so long resisted Kruger's attempts to bring it under Transvaal hegemony, now threw itself unreservedly on his side. Some of the burghers had been mobilized to help the Transvaal immediately on receipt of the news of the Raid. In the Presidential election which followed shortly after, Mr. J. G. Fraser, the leader of what had once been President Brand's party, pleaded in vain for a policy of moderation, condemning the Raid, but declaring his belief that there must be unrest in the Transvaal as long as Kruger persisted in subjecting the population of the Rand to the existing *régime* of oppression and corruption. He failed hopelessly against Mr. M. T. Steyn, a thorough-going advocate of the nationalist aspiration, to whom, as to many other Afrikanders, the Raid afforded a splendid opportunity for ceaseless denunciation and for fiery exhortations to defend the threatened cause of the Afrikander nation. The new President proclaimed himself in favour of the policy of closer union with the Transvaal, and in the following year concluded a treaty with President Kruger amounting, to all intents and purposes, to an offensive and defensive alliance, and containing the groundwork for a scheme of federation to be gradually developed in a series of regular conferences. Of this federation Mr. Steyn was led to hope that he would

some day be the president, and Kruger was careful to encourage the ambitious illusions of his would-be successor. At last Kruger had succeeded in carrying into effect his policy of reducing the Free State to the status of a dependent ally, a policy as old as the negotiations of 1887 and in a sense as old as the Raid of 1857.

The reaction in Cape Colony. Attitude of *Ons Land*.

In Cape Colony the extreme section of the Afrikander party had for some time past been chafing under the compromise with Imperialism which had been the order of the day while the Rhodes-Schreiner-Hofmeyr coalition lasted. For these the Raid furnished magnificent opportunity for rallying the party back to the old standard of the early eighties, the standard of an exclusive nationalism and of hostility to the British Empire. The leading organ of the Bond, *Ons Land*, declared itself with uncompromising frankness. A brief quotation from an article appearing not long after the Raid will show the use that was to be made of that criminal blunder on Mr. Rhodes' part:—

"Afrikanderdom has awakened to a sense of earnestness and consciousness which we have not observed since the heroic war for liberty in 1881. . . . The flaccid and cowardly Imperialism that had already begun to dilute and weaken our national blood gradually turned aside before the new current which permeated our people . . . now or never the foundation of a wide-embracing nationalism must be laid . . . let us now lay the foundation-stone of a real United South Africa on the soil of a *pure* and all-comprehensive national sentiment."

Weakness of the Bond leaders in view of the disloyal agitation.

For the moment the Raid had thrown the sentiment of all Afrikanderdom on Mr. Kruger's side, and if that sentiment could be properly worked upon the whole weight of the Afrikander party could be used to support Mr. Kruger's policy to its utmost lengths. So thought the extremists, and though many Cape Afrikanders sincerely disapproved of the misgovernment and exclusiveness of Pretoria, and though the great majority were thoroughly satisfied with British rule, it was not difficult to persuade such waverers that the only chance of preserving the peace of South Africa lay in maintaining a united front against the Imperial Government if it

endeavoured to intervene in Transvaal affairs. And so the political agitation went on steadily drifting more and more towards disloyalty, directly encouraging President Kruger to harden his heart, and thus bringing the certainty of war ever nearer. It was in vain that Mr. Rose Innes, in the debate on the Raid Inquiry in the Cape Assembly in the summer of 1896, endeavoured to persuade the Bond to accept a resolution containing a reference of the most moderate character to the mistaken policy adopted by President Kruger towards the Uitlanders. It was in vain, with each fresh proof of President Kruger's resolve to show that he had forgiven and forgotten nothing, that the Bond leaders were appealed to, and asked to stand forward and utter boldly in public the disapproval they confessed in private. Not a word was spoken in condemnation either of misgovernment in the Transvaal or of disloyal agitation in Cape Colony. Of the leaders of Colonial Afrikanderdom some frankly sympathised with the incessant agitation against the Imperial Government, others, held back by want of moral courage, or unbalanced by their indignation against Mr. Rhodes, shut their eyes to what was going on round them, or condoned it on the grounds of justifiable excitement provoked by the Raid. The Raid argument indeed, before long, became a veritable red herring drawn across the path of South African politics. The Raid was held to justify alike indefinite continuance of misgovernment in the Transvaal and steadily growing disloyalty in Cape Colony; reference to it served the purpose of argument on any and every political question. Whoever failed to take that view, from the representatives of the Imperial Government down to the editor of the pettiest news-sheet published in a Karroo village, were alike declared to have been in the plot from the first or to have been directly bought by Mr. Rhodes to subserve his infernal machinations. The bitterness of personal hatred felt for Mr. Rhodes by the party with which he had so long been allied was another element which kept the agitation alive. That hatred derived its intensity with the rank and file of the Afrikander party, not so much from the natural indignation excited by the character of Mr. Rhodes' conspiracy as from a deep resentment at

Bitter hatred against Mr. Rhodes.

the thought that they had been for years hoodwinked and outwitted, that the man whom they believed they had been using for their own ends had been using them for his, and had been working in secret to crush their cherished national aspiration.

Mr. Rhodes throws himself into the arms of the English.

The hatred against Mr. Rhodes became still more intense when he openly turned round and threw himself into the arms of the Progressive or English party. Mr. Rhodes had never sympathised much with the views of the English mercantile and town population of South Africa on questions of internal politics, nor entirely even with their views as to the relation of the Colony to the mother country, and they on their side had always regarded him with a certain degree of mistrust. Strictly speaking, there had been no English or Progressive party before the Raid; there had always been a Government party, consisting of the Bond together with the personal or local following of the politicians who, for the time being, were allied with the Bond, and a miscellaneous remainder in opposition. The English element in the population had been growing steadily ever since the development of the north and was rapidly becoming equal to the Dutch, which it had long ago swamped in the towns. But it had no political organisation. Imperialist sentiment had been growing gradually among the English in South Africa, as all over the world, after having reached its nadir in the early eighties, and had been strengthened by the conquest of Rhodesia, and the somewhat firmer attitude taken up by the Imperial Government towards the Transvaal. To this sentiment the Drifts controversy, the Uitlander agitation, the Raid, with its resultant outbreak of anti-English and anti-Imperial feeling among the Dutch, had given an enormous impulse. Whatever the merits of the Raid controversy, the mass of Englishmen in Cape Colony came to look upon Mr. Rhodes as the champion of Imperial interests against Transvaal intrigues with European powers and against disloyal agitation in the Colony. Mr. Rhodes' intention had been to abandon colonial politics for some years after the Raid fiasco, and to devote himself to the development of Rhodesia. But the demonstrations of frantic enthusiasm with which he was

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CECIL JOHN RHODES,

PRIME MINISTER OF CAPE COLONY, 1890-1896.

From a Photograph by W. & D Downey.

greeted in the big seaport towns on his return in July, 1897, from England, where he had been called as a witness before the South Africa Committee, tempted him to reconsider his position, and he decided to continue with colonial politics as the real head, though not the official leader, of a Progressive Imperialist party. That decision undoubtedly did much to increase the bitterness of party conflict and temporarily secured for the agitation of the extreme Afrikander party the acquiescence of men like Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Solomon, whose moderation and sincere loyalty have since been fully vindicated by their conduct in circumstances of exceptional difficulty.

Effect of the Raid on the British Empire.

In England and in the British colonies the effect of the Raid was hardly less striking than in South Africa. The Raid advertised the condition of the Transvaal to the British public, and roused it from the complacent self-satisfaction with which it had hitherto ignored South African affairs to a more active and intelligent interest. And if the realisation of the South African position, as revealed by the Raid, had filled the Afrikander party with a despairing terror, it was no less disquieting to British Imperialists. The German Emperor's telegram cast a flood of light over the whole series of underground machinations that had been carried on between Kruger and the German Foreign Office in violation of the whole spirit, if not of the letter, of Art. IV. of the London Convention. President Kruger's defiant and irreconcilable attitude, the rumours of large purchases made for military armaments, the agitation in the Free State and in Cape Colony, were all signs that the situation brought about by Kruger's policy, and complicated by the folly of the Raid, was more serious than the British public had ever dreamt, and that the utmost firmness would be necessary to preserve British supremacy in South Africa.

Sir Alfred Milner appointed High Commissioner, 1897.

One of the results of the increased attention paid to South African affairs was the need felt for the appointment of a statesman of commanding ability and of moderate views to the difficult post of High Commissioner. Sir Hercules Robinson, who had been made Lord Rosmead in July, 1896, an excellent constitutional governor of Cape Colony in

ordinary times, had neither the physical health nor the strength of character necessary for the exceptional task of setting the relationships of the Imperial Government and the Transvaal Republic on a permanent and satisfactory footing. On his retirement early in 1897, Mr. Chamberlain selected as his successor Sir Alfred Milner, at that time head of the Inland Revenue. The new High Commissioner was a young and comparatively unknown man; but he had already made himself a name, among those who were competent to judge, as an able administrator in Egypt and at home, and the high conception of Imperial duty set forth in his book on England's Work in Egypt had marked him out for a leading position among English statesmen. His name was not then, as it has since become, a household word, but there were few public men so universally liked and esteemed by their colleagues and associates. An advanced Liberal before the Home Rule split, and withal a genuine Imperialist, as a man known equally for the firmness of his character as for his extreme moderation and unfailing tact, he was alike acceptable to both parties in the State. His appointment was everywhere applauded as an indication that Mr. Chamberlain, in spite of the difficulties he had met in dealing with the Transvaal, was determined to pursue a patient and conciliatory policy, maintaining only those rights under the Conventions which were vital to the maintenance of British supremacy, and leaving aside all those minor claims which the Imperial Government could justly press, whether under the Conventions or on general grounds, but which it would have been bad policy to press, till the effect of the Raid, and the race antagonism aroused by it, had been given a fair time to subside. At the remarkable gathering which met on March 28 to bid Sir A. Milner farewell, Mr. Asquith, who took the chair, declared that "no appointment of our time has been received with a larger measure, both of the appreciation of experienced men and of the applause of the public." There was a universal belief that the new High Commissioner would, before taking up any definite line of policy, quietly and patiently study the whole South African problem, neither allowing himself to be biassed by natural

Universal approval of the appointment.

sentiment against the Raid, nor forcing on a crisis prematurely from over-eagerness to assert the supremacy of the Imperial power. And by the result of that study, men of the most varying shades of political opinion declared their readiness to abide. It is this unhesitating personal confidence in Sir A. Milner's wisdom and judgment, felt by those who knew him, and soon translated into the minds of the whole nation, that accounts in no small measure for the steadfast support received by the Government in carrying through Sir A. Milner's policy through all the stress of months of difficult and delicate negotiations, and through a long and exhausting war.

Sir A. Milner's careful study of the problem.

The new High Commissioner exactly fulfilled the predictions of his friends. Towards the Transvaal he adopted a patient and conciliatory attitude, pressing the representations of the Imperial Government as gently as possible, and avoiding carefully all subjects that might give rise to fresh disputes. In the meantime he devoted himself with remarkable energy to acquainting himself with South African affairs, and more especially with the affairs of Cape Colony. He travelled through the colony from end to end, coming in close contact with every section of colonial opinion. He studied Dutch in order to bring himself nearer to the Dutch farmers. He was accessible to all, and the frankness of his character and the simplicity of his manner endeared him to all who came in contact with him. Never had there been a governor so universally popular. In spite of the captious criticisms of a few extremists, who instinctively felt that a man of such ability must be dangerous, the Dutch colonists regarded him with favour, and everywhere on his tours received him with enthusiasm.

Appointment of Mr. Greene as British Agent.

Shortly before Sir A. Milner's appointment, in August, 1896, Sir Jacobus de Wet was succeeded as British Agent at Pretoria by Mr. (now Sir) Conyngham Greene, an experienced diplomatist, who, through an extremely difficult period, did much to preserve tolerable relations with the Transvaal, and who deserves the credit of having brought the negotiations to a more hopeful point in August, 1899, than they were at any period before the outbreak of war.

The Raid Inquiry.

During the summer of 1897 the long-expected Parliamentary inquiry into the circumstances of the Raid took place. It had been promised in the Queen's Speech of the previous year, but it was impossible that it should commence until the criminal proceedings against Dr. Jameson and his associates were finished. On July 28 sentence was given by the Lord Chief Justice, and the principal leaders of the Raid condemned to various periods of imprisonment for offences committed under the Foreign Enlistment Act. On July 30, 1896, Mr. Chamberlain moved for the promised Committee—

"to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company."

He added that, while he would personally have preferred that the inquiry should be held by a Commission as a more judicial body, he recognised that there was a general desire in the House to make the reference a wide one, covering general questions of policy, and therefore suitable for a Committee rather than a Commission. Sir William Harcourt concurred strongly in this view.

A Committee was accordingly nominated, but in consequence of the end of the session took no action. At the beginning of the next session Mr. Chamberlain again moved for a Committee in the same terms.* In doing so he dwelt upon the grievances of the Uitlander population and the inadequate attempts that had been made to satisfy them:—

"The Raid is indissolubly connected with the discontent in Johannesburg. The discontent in Johannesburg is founded upon the grievances of the Uitlanders. No inquiry into the origin of the Raid would therefore be complete—it would be a sham—unless it went carefully into this question of grievances, and unless it determined how far those grievances afforded a justification for that discontent and agitation in Johannesburg which, as I have said, made the Raid possible."

* Hansard, January 28 and 29, 1897.

The Committee, composed of Mr. Chamberlain, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Sir W. Harcourt, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Blake and others, met on February 16, and, after taking an enormous mass of evidence, finally reported on July 13. The following summary contains the result of their inquiry:—

The Committee's Report. Its condemnation of Mr. Rhodes and the Raid.

I. Great discontent had, for some time previous to the incursion, existed in Johannesburg, arising from the grievances of the Uitlanders.

II. Mr. Rhodes occupied a great position in South Africa; he was Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and, beyond all other persons, should have been careful to abstain from such a course of action as that which he adopted. As Managing Director of the British South Africa Company, as Director of the De Beers Consolidated Mines and the Gold Fields of South Africa, Mr. Rhodes controlled a great combination of interests; he used his position and those interests to promote and assist his policy.

Whatever justification there might have been for action on the part of the people of Johannesburg, there was none for the conduct of a person in Mr. Rhodes' position, in subsidising, organising, and stimulating an armed insurrection against the Government of the South African Republic, and employing the forces and resources of the Chartered Company to support such a revolution. He seriously embarrassed both the Imperial and Colonial Governments, and his proceedings resulted in the invasion of the territory of a State which was in friendly relations with Her Majesty, in breach of the obligation to respect the right to self-government of the South African Republic under the Conventions between Her Majesty and that state. Although Dr. Jameson "went in" without Mr. Rhodes' authority, it was always part of the plan that these forces should be used in the Transvaal in support of an insurrection. Nothing could justify such a use of such a force, and Mr. Rhodes' heavy responsibility remains, although Dr. Jameson at the last moment invaded the Transvaal without his direct sanction.

III. Such a policy once embarked upon inevitably involved Mr. Rhodes in grave breaches of duty to those to whom he owed allegiance. He deceived the High Commissioner representing the Imperial Government, he concealed his views from his colleagues in the Colonial Ministry, and from the board of the

British South Africa Company, and led his subordinates to believe that his plans were approved by his superiors.

IV. Your Committee have heard the evidence of all the Directors of the British South Africa Company, with the exception of Lord Grey. Of those who were examined, Mr. Beit and Mr. Maguire alone had cognisance of Mr. Rhodes' plans. Mr. Beit played a prominent part in the negotiations with the Reform Union; he contributed large sums of money to the revolutionary movement, and must share full responsibility for the consequences.

V. There is not the slightest evidence that the late High Commissioner in South Africa, Lord Rosmead, was made acquainted with Mr. Rhodes' plans. The evidence, on the contrary, shows that there was a conspiracy to keep all information on the subject from him. The Committee must, however, express a strong opinion upon the conduct of Sir Graham Bower, who was guilty of a grave dereliction of duty in not communicating to the High Commissioner the information which had come to his knowledge. Mr. Newton failed in his duty in a like manner.

VI. Neither the Secretary of State for the Colonies nor any of the officials of the Colonial Office received any information which made them, or should have made them or any of them, aware of the plot during its development.

VII. Finally, your Committee desire to put on record an absolute and unqualified condemnation of the Raid and of the plans which made it possible. The result caused for the time being grave injury to British influence in South Africa. Public confidence was shaken, race feeling embittered, and serious difficulties were created with neighbouring States.

Complete failure of the attempt to implicate Mr. Chamberlain.

The report dismissed with a brief statement of fact the political questions concerned with the Uitlander grievances and the whole policy of the Transvaal, which were suggested by the terms of the reference and by the light of which Mr. Chamberlain had insisted that the question of the Raid could alone be discussed. It confined itself mainly to the judicial question of responsibility for the Raid, a kind of investigation for which a Parliamentary committee is not particularly well-fitted. The findings of the Committee added very little to the facts that had already been produced at the Cape inquiry, and though the proceedings were followed with great interest in the country, the report fell rather flat. A

small section of Mr. Chamberlain's political opponents had convinced themselves, both that he was directly implicated in the Raid and that the Raid itself had been undertaken from purely stock-jobbing motives. The complete failure of their attempts to prove anything of the sort from the evidence was a disappointment to them. A great deal has since been made of the fact that the Committee did not insist on the production of certain telegrams which passed between Mr. Rhodes and some of his friends in England before the Raid, and which Mr. Rhodes refused to produce. The Committee, however, attached little importance to these, and did not think it necessary to delay their report until Mr. Rhodes could be compelled to produce them. They had a sufficient sample of the kind of information cabled to Mr. Rhodes,* and believed, with Mr. Labouchere, that his friends probably "did send Mr. Rhodes cablegrams utterly inconsistent with the facts they purported to relate, and designed to convey the impression to all to whom Mr. Rhodes might show them that the Colonial Office was more or less privy to his designs." †

With this belief as to the probable contents of the telegrams, the Committee had no hesitation in coming to their conclusion. Their position was stated by Sir William Harcourt in the House of Commons (26th July, 1897).

"If you got these telegrams to-morrow, and if they contained all that the most malignant mind can suggest: if I found that Dr. Harris had telegraphed to Mr. Rhodes saying, 'I went yesterday to Mr. Chamberlain: I told him all about it and he approved of it altogether,' and if the Colonial Secretary and Lord Selborne said that nothing of the kind took place—I, who have seen the witnesses, would believe the Colonial Secretary and Lord Selborne."

The question of the administration of the Chartered Company was, owing to the termination of the session, indefinitely postponed.

* Report, App. No. 14, 15, 16.

† Mr. Labouchere's Draft Report, p. lii.

The suzerainty controversy. Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, October 16, 1897.

Meanwhile the main controversy proceeded in a leisurely manner. The Volksraad, under pressure of Mr. Chamberlain's ultimatum, had repealed the Aliens Immigration Law, and shortly after passed a resolution (never carried into effect) for amending the Aliens Expulsion Act by giving an appeal to a court of law. For the moment, therefore, the pressure was relieved, but the principles at issue remained to be dealt with. The whole position of the South African Republic, as stated in its despatch of May 7, 1897,* was based on general principles of international law applied to ordinary treaties between independent Powers, and on precedents derived from the actual or proposed legislation of other nations. The demand that all points in dispute should be settled by an arbitrator appointed by a foreign authority assumed that there was no distinction between the relations arising out of the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 and those from an ordinary treaty between two independent Powers. These were claims which, when formally put forward, could not be passed over in silence, even though the immediate point under discussion was satisfactorily settled. After an interval of nearly five months Mr. Chamberlain replied in a despatch dated October 16, 1897.† He stated that the Convention of London was not, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, a treaty between two states on an equal footing, but "a declaration by the Queen of the conditions upon which she accorded complete self-government to the South African Republic, subject to her suzerainty, these conditions having been accepted by the delegates of the South African Republic and subsequently ratified by the Volksraad." The South African Republic was bound to adhere strictly to the terms of those conditions, and was not entitled to import into them any qualifications based on rights of nations which were not bound by similar obligations arising out of similar circumstances. After stating his contention that the Convention of London merely substituted its articles for the articles of the Convention of Pretoria, the preamble of the

* C. 8721, p. 6. † C. 8721, p. 18.

latter being still maintained, he asserted his position in regard to arbitration as follows:—

"Under these conventions, therefore, Her Majesty holds towards the South African Republic the relation of a suzerain who has accorded to the people of that Republic self-government upon certain conditions, and it would be incompatible with that position to submit to arbitration the construction of the conditions on which she accorded self-government to the Republic."

The Transvaal reply.

To this despatch the Transvaal replied after an interval of seven months in a despatch dated April 16, 1898, and covering twelve pages of blue-book.* The main part of this despatch is occupied with the question whether the relations of Great Britain to the Transvaal could be properly described as suzerainty. This, as Sir A. Milner pointed out, was rather an etymological than a political question, since it was of course common ground that those relations, whatever called, were expressed in the articles of the London Convention. The substantial points contended for were:—

"The present independence of the South African Republic derives its formal acknowledgment by the British Crown—in no sense, however, its real origin — from an international agreement, acknowledged as being equally binding on both parties."

* * * * *

"A right to constitute itself the sole judge of a document between two parties, and affecting two parties, to which it is one of the parties, has not been reserved to the British Government either in the Pretoria Convention of 1881 or in that of London of 1884.

"The British Government can therefore have no such power even under suzerainty."

On this ground, and on account of "the growing tendency among all states of European descent," the Transvaal continued to press for arbitration as "an independent pronouncement on the extent of its rights and obligations as against the Government of Her Britannic Majesty."

* C. 9507, p. 7.

The fundamental difference of view between the two parties.

The despatch, which was based on an opinion by Dr. M. J. Farrelly, a lawyer at the time resident in the Transvaal, contrasted favourably, both as regards the character and the tone of its argument, with the majority of the declarations of the Transvaal Government. The "etymological" question is certainly one open to controversy, and eminent English international lawyers, such as Professor Westlake, have been inclined to agree with that part of the Transvaal despatch which refers to it. Nor was it a point which Mr. Chamberlain particularly endeavoured to press. But the argument put forward in the first sentence quoted above was one the British Government has never accepted. It is the argument on which, at bottom, the whole conflict between the Transvaal and the British Government was based. The Transvaal always regarded the annexation as a mere usurpation. The Conventions were, in its view, merely treaties of an ordinary kind, concluded with the late usurpers, but of so unpleasant a character that it was the primary duty of the State, by all means in its power, to get rid of them. The British Government has consistently maintained that the independence of the Transvaal was by grant, and that its liberties were contained in certain charters. From 1852 onwards the Sand River Convention defined the independence granted to the Transvaal Boers. In 1877 direct sovereignty was renewed, and the Boers reverted to the status of British subjects, to be restored to a qualified independence by the Convention of 1881, subsequently modified by that of 1884. Taking into account all the facts connected with the Sand River Convention, the annexation and the retrocession, there can be no doubt that, historically, the British claim was absolutely justified. Whether after Lord Derby's action the word "suzerainty" was appropriate or not, the substance conveyed by it remained: viz., that the independence of the Transvaal was of a special and limited character, not known to ordinary international law.

Further controversy. Mr. Reitz takes up a

In a reply dated December 15, Mr. Chamberlain pointed out that since the Government of the South African Republic declared themselves prepared in every respect to abide by

the stipulations of the Convention of 1884, there was no controversy as to the essential point in the relations between the two Governments. He again asserted suzerainty as defined by the terms of the Convention of 1884, and in view of this position and of the determination of Great Britain not to permit the interference of any foreign Power, he again refused to submit to the arbitration of a foreign Power questions relating to the interpretations of the Conventions. A side issue in the discussion had been the question of the submission of treaties under Art. IV. of the London Convention. In regard to this Mr. Chamberlain now took up a peremptory attitude and declared that unless an agreement were come to upon this point it would be necessary to refuse approval of any treaty or engagement not submitted before conclusion. After a further delay of five months a reply was received dated May 9, 1899.* Dr. Leyds had in the interval been succeeded as State Secretary by Mr. Reitz. The crisis which ultimately led to war had then already begun. Nevertheless, Mr. Reitz recklessly provoked further difficulty by the uncompromising aggressiveness with which he now stated the theory that had throughout underlain the Transvaal policy—"that the now existing right of absolute self-government of this Republic is not derived from either the Convention of 1881 or that of 1884, but simply and solely follows from the inherent right of this Republic as a sovereign international state." With regard to Mr. Chamberlain's demand that treaties between the Transvaal and other States should be accompanied by a notification of the conditions of Art. IV., Mr. Reitz expressed regret at Mr. Chamberlain's peremptory tone, but agreed to comply with his requirements. In a final reply, dated July 13, 1899,† Mr. Chamberlain intimated that the British Government had no intention of continuing to discuss this question with the Government of the Republic, whose contention that the South African Republic was a sovereign international state was not in their opinion warranted either by law or history and was wholly inadmissible. With a brief summary

more uncompromising attitude, May 1899.

* C. 9507, p. 31. † C. 9507, p. 33.

of the intentions and opinions of Lord Derby and Lord Kimberley the despatch terminates.

The controversy not of phrases but of substance.

It has been argued that Mr. Chamberlain resuscitated the word suzerainty and made difficulties with the Transvaal by insisting on a phrase. Neither of these points can be maintained. Mr. Chamberlain was repeating the contention of successive secretaries of state in almost the very words of his predecessor.* The controversy was not one of phrases but of substance. The word suzerainty was vigorously resisted by the Transvaal, not from any over-nice sense of dignity but because, as appeared clearly before the end of the discussion, it resented and contested the existence of the peculiar relationship created by the Convention. That the use of the word caused no undue or unnecessary friction is sufficiently shown by the dates of the successive despatches in this leisurely controversy which spread over two years and a half, and only ripened to the final joining of issue when events were hurrying to the inevitable conflict.

The dynamite controversy.

Yet another issue of controversy between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal was the dynamite monopoly. The original monopoly, which in practice meant simply privileged importation by one firm, was a flagrant violation of the Convention and was cancelled in 1892. The new contract, though nominally a State agency, was, in the opinion of the Uitlanders, just as much a violation of the Convention, as practically the whole of the dynamite was imported in a completely, or almost completely, manufactured form, for which importation the company enjoyed preferential rights, while the profits of the undertaking went mainly to the agents—who were none other than the original concessionaires of 1887—and not to the State. In this view, apart

* Mr. S. Buxton, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, in answer to a question of Sir G. Baden-Powell on July 2, 1894, said as follows:—

"Of course, I do not know what the intention of the Government of 1884 may have been; but, taking the two Conventions, that of 1881 and that of 1884, the hon. member will see that that of 1884 affects the Articles of the Convention of 1881, but does not affect the preamble, and it is the preamble that has reference to the question of suzerainty."—26 Hansard, 686.

of course from the conventional question, the Transvaal Industrial Commission of 1897 fully coincided. When in 1898 the Government, in its desire to shield the company from the continuous attacks made upon it, gave up its own royalty of five shillings per case, retaining nothing but a somewhat problematical twenty per cent. of net profits, the purely private character of the monopoly became still more evident. Accordingly, when at the end of 1898 it became known that Kruger's Executive, in defiance of the express wishes of the majority of the Volksraad, intended prolonging the dynamite contract for another fifteen years in exchange for a further reduction of five shillings per case, Mr. Chamberlain considered it advisable to intervene. In a despatch of January 13, 1899, he stated the argument given above against the legality of the concession under the Convention, and declared that if the contract were extended Her Majesty's Government reserved the right to renew its protest, and in no way acknowledged the legality of the contract. Mr. Reitz answered on March 9 to the effect that the Transvaal Government knew well enough what was in its own interest, and that Mr. Chamberlain had no ground for interfering in the matter.

The Diamond Jubilee. Foreign complications.

Meantime the attention of England was directed elsewhere. In the summer of 1897 the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee made manifest to the whole world the profound change which the relations between the great self-governing colonies and the mother country had undergone since the great reaction which followed upon the Home Rule crisis—a change in the developing of which Mr. Chamberlain played no unimportant part. The Jubilee of 1887 had been chiefly used as an occasion to welcome the representatives of foreign powers to London. The Jubilee of 1897 was a domestic gathering of the subjects of the Queen from all parts of the world, which brought together the constituent elements of the British Empire with an enthusiasm never felt before. In the autumn of that year the Tirah campaign had occupied a considerable part of our force, and the action of Russia in the Far East had brought us within measurable distance of war. In the spring of 1898 the

war between the United States and Spain had aroused our sympathy, and the grave risk of international complications had made it expedient that our hands should be free. In the autumn of 1898 came the Soudan Expedition, winding up with a situation in which a war with France seemed for a while inevitable over the challenge of Fashoda.

Further subjects of controversy.

In South Africa the position of affairs showed no signs of improvement during the two years following Sir A. Milner's arrival. Many difficulties arose with the Boers out of their conduct of affairs in Swaziland, where we had lately admitted their rule. The attempts to evade the engagement against commandeering the persons or properties of British subjects, white or coloured, were continually being repeated.* There was very grave ill-treatment of Cape coloured boys for not being provided with Kaffir badges.† In regard to the Aliens Expulsion Law, the Volksraad went back from the resolution it had passed in July, 1897, giving a right of appeal to a court of law, and renewed the law in substantially the same terms as before.

The situation growing steadily worse.

At first Kruger's abandonment, however reluctant, of the Aliens Immigration Law and the appointment in April, 1897, of a government industrial Commission, under the chairmanship of Mr. Schalk Burger, had led Sir A. Milner to hope that the Transvaal Government was beginning to realise its mistake and was, after recovering from the shock of the Raid, slowly making the first steps on the road to reform. The report of the Commission, which was a damning indictment of Mr. Kruger's whole industrial policy, was excellent both in tone and substance, and acceptance of its recommendations would have done away with all the material, though not with the political, grievances of the mining community. But Sir A. Milner was destined to speedy disappointment. Under direct pressure from the President the proposals of the Commission were whittled away to almost nothing. In the administration one scandal followed after another. In the Legislature one law after another was passed restricting the liberties of the subject. The last safeguard went when in

* C. 9345, p. 80. † C. 9345, p. 8.

February, 1898, Chief Justice Kotzé was summarily dismissed for venturing to remind President Kruger of his promise to make some provision to secure the independence of the judiciary. Sir A. Milner began to see clearly that there was no prospect of spontaneous internal reform in the Transvaal. Not a single grievance of the Uitlanders had been redressed since the time of the Raid, and the Government of the South African Republic appeared to be becoming more arbitrary, and its attitude towards any representations of Her Majesty's Government more irreconcilable than ever. The slight improvement, in both respects, which followed the energetic action of Mr. Chamberlain in the early months of 1897 had entirely vanished, and it was becoming more and more evident that no protests or arguments were of use, unless intended to be followed by action. Meanwhile South Africa was being kept in a perpetual state of ferment, and the pro-Transvaal agitation in Cape Colony was more and more assuming a disloyal character.

Sir A. Milner makes up his mind. Speech at Graaff-Reinet March 3, 1898.

After a year's quiet study the High Commissioner had by now made up his mind as to the real nature of the situation. Having done so, he resolved to speak out freely, and make it clear to all South Africa that the Imperial Government was in earnest in its determination to have reform in the Transvaal, and that the one danger to peace lay in the fear that sympathy of the Dutch in Cape Colony might encourage President Kruger to harden his heart and refuse to make any concession. It was not long before an occasion offered itself. At the opening of the railway to Graaff-Reinet on March 3, 1898, an address was somewhat unexpectedly presented to Sir A. Milner protesting against the charges of disloyalty made against the Bond and requesting him to convey to the Queen the expression of the unswerving loyalty of that organisation. Sir A. Milner took the opportunity to set forth clearly what he conceived to be the duty of British subjects of Dutch nationality in their relations towards the Imperial Government and towards the Republics. The speech was so important in its effects upon Dutch feeling and presented so admirable an exposition of the South African situation in the beginning of 1898 that

it is worth while to quote a considerable portion of it in full:—

"Of course I am glad to be assured that any section of Her Majesty's subjects are loyal, but I should be much more glad to be allowed to take that for granted. Why should I not? What reason could there be for disloyalty? . . . You live under an absolutely free system of government, protecting the rights and encouraging the pride and independence of every citizen. You have courts of law manned by men of the highest ability and integrity, and secure in the discharge of their high functions from all danger of external interference. You have, at least as regards the white races, perfect equality of citizenship, and these things have not been won from a reluctant Sovereign. They have been freely and gladly bestowed upon you because freedom and self-government, justice and equality, are the first principles of British policy—and they are secured to you by the strength of the Power that gave them, and whose Navy protects your shores from attack without your being asked to contribute one pound to that protection unless you yourselves desire it. Well, gentlemen, of course you are loyal. It would be monstrous if you were not. And now if I have one wish it is that I may never again have to deal at any length with this topic. But in order that I may put it aside with a good conscience, I wish, having been more or less compelled to deal with it, to do so honestly, and not to shut my eyes to unpleasant facts. The great bulk of the population of the colony, Dutch as well as English, are, I firmly believe, thoroughly loyal in the sense that they know they live under a good constitution and have no wish to change it, and regard with feelings of reverence and pride that august lady at the head of it. If we had only domestic questions to consider . . . the charge of disloyalty would be so obviously absurd that nobody would take it seriously. . . . What gives the sting to the charge of disloyalty in this case, what makes it stick, and what makes people wince under it, is the fact that the political controversies of this country at present unfortunately turn largely upon another question. I mean the relations of Her Majesty's Government to the South African Republic, and that wherever there is any prospect of any difference between them, a number of people in the Colony at once vehemently, and without even the semblance of impartiality, espouse the side of the Republic. Personally, I do not think they are disloyal . . . I do not take it that in this case people are

necessarily disloyal because they carry their sympathy with the Government of the Transvaal . . . to a point which gives some ground for the assertion that they seem to care much more for the independence of the Transvaal than for the honour and interests of the country to which they themselves belong. For my own part, I believe the whole object of the people for espousing the cause of the Transvaal is to prevent an open rupture between that country and the British Government. . . . They think that if they can only impress upon the British Government that in case of war with the Transvaal it would have a great number of its own subjects at least in sympathy against it, that is a way to prevent such a calamity. But in this they are totally wrong, for this policy rests on the assumption that Great Britain has some occult designs on the independence of the Transvaal. . . . But that assumption is the exact opposite of the truth . . . it is not any aggressiveness on the part of Her Majesty's Government which now keeps up the spirit of unrest in South Africa. It is that unprogressiveness—I will not say retrogressiveness—of the Government of the Transvaal, and its deep suspicion of the intention of Great Britain, which makes it devote its attention to imaginary external dangers, when every impartial observer can see perfectly well that the real dangers which threaten it are internal. Now I wish to be perfectly fair. Therefore let me say that this suspicion, though absolutely groundless, is not, after all that has happened, altogether unnatural. I accept the situation that at the present moment any advice that I could tender, or that any of your British fellow-citizens could tender in that quarter, though it was the best advice in the world, would be instantly rejected because it was British. But the same does not apply to the Dutch citizens of this colony, and especially to those who have gone so far in the expression of their sympathy for the Transvaal as to expose themselves to these charges of disloyalty to their own flag. Their goodwill, at least, cannot be suspected across the border, and if all they desire—and I believe it is what they desire—is to preserve the South African Republic and to promote good relations between it and the British colonies and Government, then let them use all their influence, not in confirming the Transvaal in unjustified suspicions, not in encouraging its Government in obstinate resistance to all reform, but in inducing it gradually to assimilate its institutions, and what is even more important than institutions, the temper and spirit of its administration to those of the free communities of South Africa, such as this colony

or the Orange Free State. That is the direction in which a peaceful way out of these inveterate troubles, which have now plagued this country for more than thirty years, is to be found."

Sensation created by the speech. Devotion of the British to Sir A. Milner.

The speech created a tremendous sensation. Its frankness came as a complete shock to that section of the Dutch which had assumed somewhat hastily that the conciliatory and patient attitude of the High Commissioner were signs of weakness. From that moment Sir A. Milner was, in the eyes of the majority of the Afrikander party, an enemy; he very soon came to be *the* enemy. The British in South Africa had already recognised him as a friend; he soon became their leader, as it gradually became known that in him the Imperial Government had sent out a man who possessed both the courage to lay his finger fearlessly on the sore spot of South Africa, and the ability to bring about a solution of the South African problem. Nothing is more remarkable than the absolute and unquestioning confidence the British population of South Africa have placed in Sir A. Milner. Throughout all the delicate negotiations that preceded the outbreak of war, and through all the troubles and difficulties that have followed since, there has never been a word of criticism from British South Africans of the High Commissioner's policy.

Cape politics. Sir G. Sprigg succeeded by Mr. Schreiner.

The provisional Ministry under Sir Gordon Sprigg, which had followed upon Mr. Rhodes' resignation immediately after the Raid, was, in the beginning of 1898, in a very insecure condition. The division into a Progressive or English and pro-Imperial party, and a Bond party pledged to opposition to the Imperial Government over the Transvaal question, had by this time become quite clearly marked. Originally relying to a very considerable extent on the Dutch vote the Ministry had gradually, as the Afrikander agitation in Cape Colony increased, come to be at the head of the Progressive or English party. But as the process went on the majority at the Government's disposal had steadily dwindled down to the vanishing point. Its only hope lay in a redistribution bill which would recognise the

enormous increase of the English element in the population. Such a bill had actually passed its second reading in June, 1898, when the Ministry was overthrown on a vote of no confidence proposed by Mr. Schreiner, who had now come forward as the recognised parliamentary head of the Afrikander party. Feeling ran very high over the general election which followed. Mr. Schreiner's object was to put the Afrikander party into power in order to oppose if possible any attempt of the Imperial Government at an intervention which he felt was only too likely to bring about war. That was the very policy that Sir A. Milner had warned his hearers at Graaff-Reinet would make war inevitable, but in justice to Mr. Schreiner it cannot in any sense be described as a disloyal policy. There was, however, much in the Afrikander agitation and in the election contest that justified the assertion of the Progressives that there was a deliberate attempt to subvert the supremacy of the Imperial Government in South Africa. The members of the Bond in the country districts by no means confined themselves to the moderate and loyal language of Mr. Schreiner's election manifesto, and sedition was openly preached at many public meetings.

Mistaken policy of the Afrikander leaders.

More mischievous than the seditious vapourings of ignorant and irresponsible persons was the acquiescence in them of the leaders of the party. These men realised perfectly clearly the intolerable character of Transvaal misgovernment; they commented on it freely in private, but when it came to public utterance not one of them had the courage of his convictions, or could talk of anything but the unjustifiableness of Imperial intervention and the need for opposing it with the whole moral force of Afrikanderdom. On March 11, 1898, just a week after Sir A. Milner's Graaff-Reinet speech, Mr. Merriman wrote to President Steyn:—

"One cannot conceal the fact that the greatest danger to the future lies in the attitude of President Kruger and his vain hope of building up a State on a foundation of a narrow, unenlightened minority, and his obstinate rejection of all prospect of using the materials which lie ready to hand to establish a true Republic on a broad liberal basis. The report of recent discussions in the

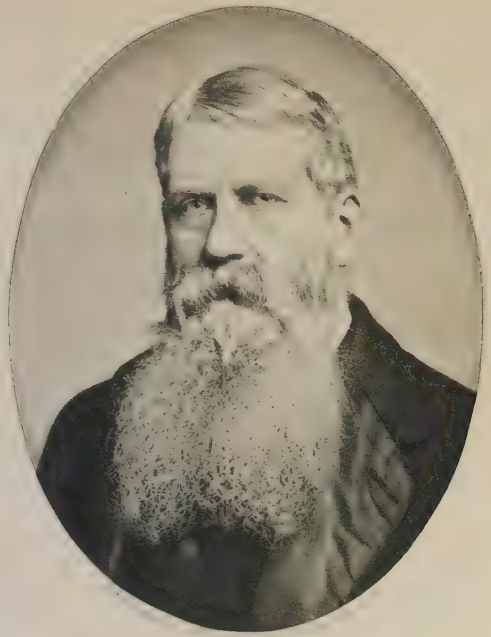
Volksraad on his promises and their mismanagement fill one with apprehension. Such a state of affairs cannot last, it must break down from inherent rottenness, and it will be well if the fall does not sweep away the freedom of all of us. I write in no hostility to Republics; my own feelings are all in the opposite direction. . . . Humanly speaking, the advice and goodwill of the Free State is the only thing that stands between the South African Republic and a catastrophe."

These facts, which according to Mr. Merriman could not be concealed, were yet the very things he and his political colleagues did sedulously conceal from the Dutch electorate. Had he published them, had he made them the text of his election addresses a few months later, his constituents might have been less prone to engage in rebellion. Knowing Kruger's character and knowing the temper of the British Government the Afrikander leaders yet persisted in the hope that they could stay the hand of the one by agitation in Cape Colony, or reform the other by confidential outpourings to Mr. Steyn. The "advice and goodwill" of the Free State and the "moral resistance" of the Cape Dutch were the very things that helped to precipitate the catastrophe Mr. Merriman dreaded.

The new Afrikander ministry.

After a bitter and keenly-contested election the Afrikander party secured a majority of one (though it polled a very considerable minority of the total vote), with which it faced Parliament in September. The Afrikander party is remarkably homogeneous in its composition, but the Ministry at the head of it comprised men of widely different political views and antecedents, whose chief political bond was a common dislike and suspicion of Mr. Rhodes, and a belief that Mr. Rhodes was, through the Progressive party and through the English press of South Africa, trying to bring about intervention in the Transvaal. Only Messrs. Schreiner, Herholdt, and Te Water (the latter the parliamentary mouthpiece of Mr. Hofmeyr, the real leader of the party) had in former years been regularly associated with the Bond. Messrs. Sauer and Merriman had been free-lances of pronounced radical and republican tendencies, but by no means in other ways believers in the Bond

THE RIGHT HON. LORD ROSMEAD, P.C., G.C.M.G.
(SIR HERCULES ROBINSON),
HIGH COMMISSIONER, 1881--1889 AND 1895--1897.



THE RIGHT HON. LORD LOCH, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,
HIGH COMMISSIONER, 1889-1895.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

policy. The latter indeed, one of the most interesting men and most uncertain politicians in South Africa, had in the past been one of the bitterest opponents of the Dutch nationalist ideal, and had even, just before the Raid, expressed his sympathy with the desire of the Uitlanders to rise and put an end to Kruger's oligarchy. Mr. Solomon, the new Attorney-General, was a moderate who had thrown in his lot with Mr. Schreiner from a distrust of Mr. Rhodes' policy, but had in no sense definitely identified himself with the party with which he was thus temporarily allied. With so small a majority the new Government found itself quite unable to resist the demand of the Opposition for redistribution. But it was successful enough to secure the assent of the Opposition to a compromise which gave a slight measure of redistribution, and which was so well engineered that the partial elections which followed in the spring of 1899, so far from throwing out the Government, actually increased its majority to eight.

Sir A. Milner visits England, Nov. 1898. Sir W. Butler takes up anti-Uitlander position.

On November 2 Sir A. Milner left South Africa for a visit to England, from which he did not return till the middle of February. During his absence the duties of the High Commissionership were filled for a few weeks by Major-General Cox, until the arrival at the Cape of Lieutenant-General Sir W. Butler, who had been selected to fill the chief military command in South Africa, left vacant by the sudden death of Sir W. Goodenough. The arrival of the new acting High Commissioner coincided with the sudden recrudescence of the Transvaal crisis provoked by the Edgar case and the first petition to the Queen. The excitement in the Transvaal at once communicated itself to Cape Colony. The petition was a direct demand for intervention; if it was accepted the whole effort of the Afrikander party was jeopardised. For the moment, however, the Afrikander party was secure. Sir W. Butler had thrown himself completely into their arms the moment he had landed, and had straightway convinced himself that the English population of the Transvaal had no real grievances, and were only striving to make mischief. He was persuaded to reject the petition. He plainly gave those Uitlanders who

met him to understand that he disapproved of any agitation in the Transvaal, and was quite content, as far as he was concerned, to let the Kruger *régime* continue indefinitely.

Mr. Schreiner and the Navy vote. Dutch loyalty.

The close of the year in Cape Colony was marked by one incident of special interest. On December 2 Mr. Schreiner in an eloquent and patriotic speech proposed a measure by which the colony should contribute the sum of £30,000 annually towards the expenses of the Imperial Navy, thus redeeming the promise made by Sir G. Sprigg during the Jubilee. The measure was supported alike by Dutch and English members of the Assembly. It should always be remembered that, as far as the majority of the Dutch subjects of the Queen in South Africa is concerned, there has never been any disloyalty except on one point only—the relationship of the Imperial Government to the Republics. Unfortunately, the misguided policy of President Kruger made that one point the vital issue of South African politics. The hostility to the British Empire which had been awakened by the war of 1881 was revived in 1896 by the Raid, and kept alive by the conflict between President Kruger and the Imperial Government which culminated in the late war. The war fanned it into a fierce flame. But apart from the Transvaal question, apart from the irritation created by the Transvaal policy, and the ambitions fostered by it, the natural tendency of the Dutch is to be loyal, or at any rate to acquiesce in the advantages of British citizenship. Even in the excitement of the Raid Mr. Hofmeyr strongly repudiated the German Emperor's telegram in the name of his co-nationalists. Of course it is no doubt true that some of the members who voted for the Navy Bill did so only because it would please Mr. Schreiner and take in the British public at home, and with no other feeling towards the Imperial connexion than the desire to be quit of it. But those were not the sentiments of the majority. The majority voted because they knew that the British fleet protected their shores, and because they knew that under British rule they enjoyed the fullest freedom, justice, and equality.

CHAPTER IX

THE SECOND REFORM MOVEMENT IN JOHANNESBURG

Disastrous effect of the Raid on the Uitlander community.

The Jameson Raid had ruined the Reform movement, and left the British community upon the Witwatersrand in a state of utter helplessness and confusion. In its dealings with Mr. Rhodes and the Raiders, Johannesburg had committed a serious blunder; but it suffered afterwards for the sins of others, and its punishment was greater than its offence. By hasty judgments, based on insufficient knowledge, the whole community was branded with the stigma of cowardice; and with reputation itself, respect was gone. Its leaders were in prison, or after their release condemned to a silence of three years' duration. Every hope of emancipation by appeal to the resources of South Africa alone had disappeared, and it was too soon as yet to think of the only possible alternative. Neither in South Africa nor elsewhere was the Imperial idea then so potent as it has since become, and the conspicuous failure of the High Commissioner to assert his influence or rise to the height of his responsibilities in the beginning of 1896 was not encouraging to those who hoped to find in Imperial intervention a solution of the problem. A dull despair settled upon the people of Johannesburg, and, with only a few exceptions, men whose energies under fairer auspices might have found an outlet in public life buried themselves in the daily routine of business, their only ideal the accumulation of wealth sufficient to enable them to leave the country.

Kruger's opportunity.

Fortune, which had always been kind to President Kruger, had now so strengthened his position that many believed he would see the wisdom of winning over to his side the thousands of Uitlanders who were ever ready to

respond to any show of generosity on the part of the Government. But in the use he made of this great opportunity, the President showed neither magnanimity nor statesmanship. During the years 1896, 1897, and 1898 not a single grievance was redressed, while one security after another for the liberties of the immigrant population disappeared. The Aliens Expulsion and the Aliens Immigration Law have already been dealt with in the preceding chapter.

The High Court crisis, 1897. Dismissal of Chief Justice Kotzé, 1898.

In February, 1897, the crisis between the Executive and the High Court became acute. In the Witfontein case, already referred to, Chief Justice Kotzé had given judgment in favour of one of the plaintiffs, an American called Brown, ignoring as unconstitutional a special resolution of the Volksraad passed in order retrospectively to absolve the Government from all liability. The Volksraad, at the instance of the President, promptly replied with a Law, the well-known Law I. of 1897, which imposed upon all future judges and landdrosts an oath relinquishing the so-called "testing right," or right of testing the constitutionality of a law, and empowering the President to exact, on pain of instant dismissal, a similar pledge from the existing members of the judiciary. The judges promptly protested in a body, but by the mediation of Sir Henry de Villiers, a compromise was arranged, by which the President promised to pass a measure guaranteeing the independence of the High Court, and the crisis was for the moment averted. A year later, however, as Kruger showed no signs of any intention to fulfil his promise, Mr. Kotzé renewed his protest and was at once dismissed under Law I. of 1897, his place as Chief Justice being filled by Mr. Gregorowski, who, a year before, had been loudest in denunciation of the President's action.* The same year witnessed

* In the abstract no doubt there is a great deal to be said for the complete freedom of the Legislature from such control by the judiciary as is created by the right of testing the constitutionality of a law, and no Englishman would wish to introduce the American system into this country. But the British system is only possible with a parliament where legislation receives the fullest discussion in a series of readings, and where the criticisms of every interest represented are freely heard. In the Transvaal a score of ignorant or interested farmers, swayed by one imperious will, claimed the right by mere resolution to alter the whole

further interference with the liberty of the Press. A Press Law of a sweeping character had been passed at the end of 1896. It did not, however, go far enough for the President, who, in the spring of 1897, by edict suspended the *Star* and the *Critic*. In this case the Courts decided against him, and the President did not think the matter of sufficient moment to secure a resolution of the Volksraad overriding their decision. But in September, 1898, the Law was strengthened by amendments that drew a protest even from the *Standard and Diggers' News*, the subsidized organ of the Government. Fortunately, the provisions of the amended Law were so vague and unintelligible that they never became fully operative.

Interference with the liberty of the Press.

In the spring of 1897 the President was induced to appoint a Commission of Inquiry into the administration and grievances of the mining industry, apparently in the hope that a public investigation might be made to reveal such waste and maladministration in the conduct and management of the industry as would make the burdens imposed by the policy of the Government seem trivial by comparison. If this was so, the result was exactly the opposite of what was anticipated. The Commission, under the chairmanship of Mr. Schalk Burger, a member of the Executive Council, conducted the inquiry in a spirit of unexpected honesty and fairness, and its report formed a complete vindication of the industry from the charges which had been recklessly brought against it, while the case against the Government on every point was demonstrated by overwhelming evidence. It was shown that while the mines, on the one hand, were constantly reducing expenses by the introduction of the latest appliances and the greatest perfection of method and process known to science, the Government, on the other, by its policy of concessions, by artificially increasing the cost of living, by its treatment of the question of Kaffir labour, by its maladministration of the Liquor Law, by its maintenance of the dynamite monopoly, by its failure to deal with the crime of gold thefts, and

The Industrial Commission. Kruger nullifies its proposals, 1897.

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conditions of a complex industry in a morning's sitting, or to interfere in a case actually proceeding before the Courts. No judge with any proper respect for his profession could acquiesce in such a claim.

by its railway policy, was responsible for such a constant piling up of the burdens upon the industry, that many of the weaker mines had been compelled to cease operations. The report of the Industrial Commission, however, was far too honest to suit the President. So great was his indignation that he openly charged Mr. Schalk Burger with being a traitor to his country for having signed it, and he forthwith appointed a Committee of the Volksraad to consider and emasculate the findings of the Commission. Most of the recommendations of the Commission were rejected. Some reductions were made in the railway tariff, duties were remitted on some articles of ordinary life and put on others; the net result was that, save for the moral and political advantage secured by the industry, things remained in the same condition as before.

The new Johannesburg municipality, September 1897.

In September of this year, moreover, President Kruger fulfilled his promise of conferring municipal privileges upon Johannesburg, and fulfilled it in the usual way. Such little power as was vested in the Town Council was put almost entirely into the hands of the fractional burgher element in the population. As a matter of fact the new Town Council, under the control of its burgher majority, speedily acquired a reputation for unsavoury dealings which made it an object of distrust and hostility to every respectable inhabitant of Johannesburg.

The Record Reign celebration at Johannesburg, 1897.

The year, however, had one gleam of light for the British inhabitants of the Transvaal. The wave of Imperial enthusiasm which swept over the British Empire at the time of the Diamond Jubilee did not leave Johannesburg untouched. A "Record Reign" celebration was organised, chiefly by the exertions of the late Mr. W. Y. Campbell, and carried through with the greatest enthusiasm and success, and by reminding British subjects that amid all their humiliations they were still citizens of the greatest Empire in the world, it did much to foster the already growing tendency to look to the Imperial Government for an adequate discharge of its obligations. The appointment shortly before of Sir Alfred Milner to the office of High Commissioner had made things possible which were not possible before, and had

excited hopes which, during Lord Rosmead's tenure of office, would have seemed visionary and chimerical.

The South African League.

And even in the darkest hour there was a small band of men who had never lost faith in the power and justice of their country, and who, in a missionary spirit, toiled bravely at the apparently hopeless task of arousing Johannesburg from its lethargy and awakening the conscience of England at a time when the wrongs of British subjects in the Transvaal were well-nigh forgotten. Banded together as the Transvaal branch of the South African League they had all the unpopularity which missionaries in any cause must ever have; while, in addition, though practically an independent body with distinct objects of their own, they incurred all the odium which rightly or wrongly attaches to the South African League in Cape Colony as a party organisation. They were none of them men conspicuous for their wealth, or with recognised claims to leadership when the movement began, and in a community where capitalists of vast resources were supposed to be the mainspring of all political agitation, their society was in a state of chronic financial embarrassment. The League was made an object of constant vituperation and misrepresentation by the pro-Boer press, which was never weary of denouncing its members in language that would have been exaggerated if applied to Continental anarchists. "I have yet to learn," said Sir Alfred Milner, in one of his despatches, in commenting on the charges of violence and political mischief-making so persistently brought against it, "that the League aims at anything more than the reasonably fair treatment of the non-Boer resident population in the Transvaal."

The League takes up the Cape boy grievances. Sir W. Butler's onslaught on the League, December 1898.

For a long time the members of the League were like voices crying in the wilderness. They first came into prominence towards the end of 1898, and did good service by taking up the case of the Cape boys—British subjects of mixed blood from Cape Colony or St. Helena—who had been made the victims of gross maltreatment and persistent persecution by one Lombaard, the field-cornet of Johannesburg, for not being provided with Kaffir badges. In this connection the League had the misfortune to incur the

displeasure of Sir William Butler, who as Acting High Commissioner made them the objects of a gratuitous and insulting attack in a despatch to Mr. Chamberlain without a particle of evidence produced in justification. But beyond this extraordinary exhibition of prejudice on the part of the Queen's representative for the time being and the painful effect left on the minds of those who followed the Lombaard incident at the time, or subsequently studied the correspondence, the efforts of the League on this occasion had little result.

Dr. Leyds resigns the State Secretaryship and goes to Europe. The policy of Afrikander consolidation, 1898.

Meanwhile a series of alterations took place in the Government of the Transvaal, whose importance was not recognised at the time either by the Uitlanders or by the Home Government. In the spring of 1898 Dr. Leyds arranged to get permanently sent to Europe as Minister of the Republic, with large powers and with abundant financial resources at his disposal. President Kruger was determined to renew those negotiations for a European alliance which the German Emperor's telegram had temporarily put in abeyance. The relations between Great Britain and several of the Continental powers were difficult in various parts of the world, and perhaps appeared to the President to be more strained than they really were. In any case he wished to keep closely in touch with the international situation in order to be able to judge at any given moment how far the Imperial Government could really venture to go in the direction of applying pressure. For Dr. Leyds himself, the prospect of playing the diplomatist at European Courts was by no means disagreeable. But there was also another reason for Dr. Leyds' mission. The Raid had taught Kruger no lesson in statesmanship, but it had made him realise one important fact—the necessity of conciliating and consolidating all Afrikanderdom. He began to see that he had made a mistake in excluding from office and influence the colonial and Free State Afrikanders and in relying too entirely upon his Hollanders. The honours and emoluments of Pretoria could no longer safely be kept for a narrow circle of dependents, but would have to be opened to all who were heart and soul for the nationalist cause, and

the whole of Afrikanderdom thus bound closer together. The wave of nationalist chauvinism which had swept over all Dutch South Africa after the Raid had created a new school inspired with the profoundest contempt for English military power and the strongest belief in a "forward Afrikander policy," as against the constitutional evolutionist methods which had been in favour at the Cape and in the Free State. Kruger had become the hero of "Young Afrikanderdom," and he quickly grasped the advantage of fostering and encouraging the movement and of keeping himself at its head.

The Young Afrikanders in power. Hopes of the Uitlanders.

The relegation to Europe of the man who was regarded as the head and forefront of Hollanderism was the formal proclamation of the new policy. In June Mr. Reitz, the late President of the Free State, and the founder of the Bond, was appointed to the post of State Secretary. Mr. Smuts, a young colonial barrister of no experience but considerable ability, who had taken a distinguished degree at Cambridge, was made State Attorney. In every department of State the sons of members of the Cape Parliament and the Free State Volksraad were appointed to the posts that had been largely Hollander preserves. The Transvaal Progressives were reconciled, the leading families in the Free State and Cape Colony were bound to the new Kruger *régime* by intimate personal and political relations and by the hope of more favours yet to come.* Even the Uitlanders who had suffered so long under Hollander misgovernment welcomed the new appointments. Here were men who habitually spoke English, who regarded things from an English, or at least a colonial point of view,

* Much was made during the war by Dutch politicians in Cape Colony of the "cruel strain" upon their loyalty caused by the presence of their sons and nephews in the Boer ranks exposed to the "bayonets of the hired soldiery." It has not been generally realised to how great an extent those "sons and nephews" only went up to the Transvaal within the last year or two before the war, and that they went up with the express intention of carrying through the "forward policy" against the British Government, a policy which always looked to the "Mauser" as its most effective argument. The strain on their loyalty should have been felt when the sons and nephews took appointments under a government whose intentions were well known. But the fact that the "strain" was so great, even in cases where it did not lead to rebellion, is an indication of the success of Kruger's new policy.

who were known to be honest and progressive, some of whom had formerly even expressed their sympathy for the Uitlanders' cause; evidently there was some hope of reform. So reasoned the Uitlanders. Unfortunately they were soon to find themselves mistaken; men like Mr. Reitz or Mr. Smuts undoubtedly were honest, but their honesty was purely personal; it had no effect on the general financial policy of the Kruger *régime*. The fact is that the much-abused Hollanders were not so much the source and inspiration of corruption in the Transvaal as its instruments, and their influence over the President's policy was less than has sometimes been assumed. In other matters, in regard to the policy of the Government towards the Uitlanders and still more towards the Imperial Government, the change was for the worse rather than for the better. For the Hollanders the carrying out of Kruger's policy was largely a matter of business. For the "Young Afrikanders" it was a matter of fanatical conviction. Towards both Uitlanders and Imperial Government their attitude was more open and more defiant. It was with Mr. Smuts' connivance that the Amphitheatre meeting was violently broken up, and by his express orders that the warrants were issued in September, 1899, for the arrest of Messrs. Monypenny and Pakeman, editors of the *Star* and the *Leader*. It was Messrs. Smuts and Reitz who counselled the wholesale expulsion of British subjects at the beginning of the war. Dr. Leyds would never have penned the provocative despatches which these gentlemen composed for the benefit of the Imperial Government in the course of the year that preceded the war. Unfortunately they knew just enough about British and European politics to completely misunderstand them, though enough to impress Kruger with the belief that they knew all. In no small measure the "Young Afrikanders" were responsible for bringing about the situation which immediately preceded the war, and when it had come about they were the most urgent in driving Kruger into issuing his ultimatum and taking the aggressive.

The change one for the worse.

In the last days of 1898 an event occurred which was destined to be fruitful in its consequences. On the night of Sunday, December 18, a Boer policeman named Jones forcibly

entered the house of Tom Jackson Edgar, a boilermaker and a British subject, and shot him dead with a revolver. Edgar on his way home had been insulted by a party of three men, one of whom he had felled to the ground before entering his house, which was close at hand. The police were summoned, and three of them arriving broke in the door of the house, and as Edgar advanced to meet them Jones shot him dead with his revolver. Jones was arrested and remanded next day on a charge of murder. But on the following day the charge was reduced to culpable homicide by the Public Prosecutor and the prisoner was released on bail of £200, which was not even required to be paid in cash. The event aroused a storm of indignation in Johannesburg, especially among Edgar's fellow working men, by whom he had been universally liked and respected. In deference to representations by Mr. Fraser, the acting British Agent in Pretoria, Jones was rearrested, but the anger of the public was not appeased. On Christmas Eve 4000 British subjects, led by Messrs. Dodd and Webb, the secretary and treasurer of the South African League, proceeded to the office of the British Vice-Consul, Mr. Emrys Evans, who received them on the balcony of the Standard Buildings, and presented a petition to the Queen. The Vice-Consul promised to forward the petition to the proper quarter; but on January 4 Mr. Fraser informed the petitioners that for various reasons, but mainly on the ground of the publication of the petition in the South African press, before presentation, he was unable to take part in its transmission.

The Edgar case. The first Uitlander petition and its refusal, December 1898.

No sooner was this decision known than the Pretoria Government struck home by causing the arrest of Messrs. Webb and Dodd on a charge of contravention of the Public Meetings Act, by the part they took in the demonstration of December 24. Bail was allowed, and in the first instance was fixed at a sum of £1,000 for each. The comparison of this amount with the £200 thought sufficient in the case of the policeman Jones intensified the indignation of the British community. A meeting of protest was summoned for the 14th January, to be held in the Amphitheatre under the auspice of the League; and though under the Act

Arrest of Messrs. Dodd and Webb. Breaking up of the Amphitheatre meeting, January 1899.

meetings held in an enclosed place were perfectly legal, the organisers, in order to make assurance doubly sure, obtained the express assent of the Government. When the proceedings opened it was found that organised bands of armed Boers, including policemen in plain clothes, led by prominent Government officials, had been distributed through the hall. Beginning with uproar and passing to riot, they speedily compelled the abandonment of the meeting. Several British subjects were seriously injured, and the incident added fresh fuel to the already glowing flame of Uitlander indignation.*

The Uitlanders resolve to send in a second petition, February 1899.

The rejection of the petition of December 24 was a great disappointment to the members of the League and to those who had worked with them in its promotion. It was felt, however, that the real responsibility for their failure on this occasion lay not so much in any informality in their proceedings as in the avowed hostility of the acting High Commissioner; and it was decided before abandoning the method of petition to make another attempt upon the return of Sir Alfred Milner. A fresh petition was drafted and carried round for signature. In view of the official explanation that the previous petition had failed by reason of its premature publication, the greatest precautions were taken, and with extraordinary success, to avoid a similar result upon this occasion, though a then unpublished ruling of Mr. Chamberlain's, in a despatch dated February 10, showed that previous publication was not a sufficient reason for rejection. Owing in part to the secrecy of the canvass, in part to the apathy of the well-to-do classes in Johannesburg, induced by renewed activity in the share market after a long period of stagnation, signatures came in but slowly. But on February 25 the policeman Jones, charged with culpable

* For the part he played on this occasion, Mr. Wybergh, the chairman of the League, who was also chairman of the meeting, was compelled to resign his lucrative appointment as consulting engineer to the Consolidated Goldfields, one of the largest companies on the Rand, and the one with which Mr. Rhodes is specially connected. The fact is of interest in view of the mistaken conception entertained in many quarters of Mr. Rhodes' influence among the Uitlanders, and of the share of the "capitalists" in the second reform movement.

homicide, was acquitted, and, to make matters worse, the presiding judge, Mr. Justice Kock, declared in Court that he agreed with the verdict, and that he hoped the police under difficult circumstances would always do their duty. From that moment, if not in the town, all along the Reef, signatures to the petition flowed in freely. By March 24 the number had reached the great total of 21,684, and as Mr. Chamberlain had just stated, on March 20, in the House of Commons in justification of the Government's policy of non-intervention in the Transvaal for the redress of the Uitlander grievances, that he had never been asked by the British subjects on the spot to intervene, it was decided to forward the petition at once rather than wait for further signatures which might readily have been obtained. The petition was handed as a sealed packet to the British Agent for transmission to the High Commissioner, and in due course Johannesburg was informed that it had gone forward to the Secretary of State. The text of this historic document is as follows :—

The HUMBLE PETITION of BRITISH SUBJECTS resident on the Witwatersrand, South African Republic, to HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA.

Sheweth that :—

Text of the Uitlander petition.

1. For a number of years, prior to 1896, considerable discontent existed among the Uitlander population of the South African Republic, caused by the manner in which the Government of the country was being conducted. The great majority of the Uitlander population consists of British subjects.

2. It was, and is, notorious that the Uitlanders have no share in the government of the country, although they constitute an absolute majority of the inhabitants of this State, possess a very large proportion of the land, and represent the intellect, wealth, and energy of the State.

3. The feelings of intense irritation which have been aroused by this state of things have been aggravated by the manner in which remonstrances have been met. Hopes have been held out and promises have been made by the Government of this State from time to time, but no practical amelioration of the conditions of life has resulted.

The Uitlander petition.

4. Petitions, signed by large numbers of Your Majesty's subjects, have been repeatedly addressed to the Government of this State, but have failed of their effect, and have even been scornfully rejected.

5. At the end of 1895 the discontent culminated in an armed insurrection against the Government of this State, which, however, failed of its object.

6. On that occasion the people of Johannesburg placed themselves unreservedly in the hands of Your Majesty's High Commissioner, in the fullest confidence that he would see justice done to them.

7. On that occasion also President Kruger published a proclamation, in which he again held out hopes of substantial reforms.

8. Instead, however, of the admitted grievances being redressed, the spirit of the legislation adopted by the Volksraad during the past few years has been of a most unfriendly character, and has made the position of the Uitlanders more irksome than before.

9. In proof of the above statement, Your Majesty's petitioners would humbly refer to such measures as the following :—

The Immigration of Aliens Act (Law 30 of 1896);
The Press Law (Law 26 of 1896);
The Aliens Expulsion Law of 1896.

Of these, the first was withdrawn at the instance of Your Majesty's Government, as being an infringement of the London Convention of 1884.

By the second the President is invested with the powers of suppressing wholly, or for a stated time, any publication which in his individual opinion is opposed to good manners or subversive of order. This despotic power he has not hesitated to exercise towards newspapers which support British interests, while newspapers which support the Government have been allowed to publish inflammatory and libellous articles, and to advocate atrocious crimes without interference.

The Aliens Expulsion Act draws a distinction between the Burghers of the State and Uitlanders which, Your Majesty's petitioners humbly submit, is in conflict with the Convention of 1884. Thus, whilst Burghers of the State are protected from expulsion, British subjects can be put over the border at the will

of the President, without the right of appealing to the High Court, which is, nevertheless, open to the offending Burgher. This law was repealed, only to be re-enacted in all its essential provisions during the last session of the Volksraad. The Uitlander petition.

10. The promise made by the President with regard to conferring Municipal Government upon Johannesburg was to outward appearance kept ; but it is an ineffective measure, conferring small benefit upon the community, and investing the inhabitants with but little additional power of legislating for their own municipal affairs. Of the two members to be elected for each ward, one at least must be a Burgher. Besides this, the Burgomaster is appointed by the Government, not elected by the people. The Burgomaster has a casting vote, and, considering himself a representative of the Government and not of the people, has not hesitated to oppose his will to the unanimous vote of the Councillors. The Government also possess the right to veto any resolution of the Council. As the Burghers resident in Johannesburg were estimated at the last census as 1,039 in number as against 23,503 Uitlanders, and as they belong to the poorest and most ignorant class, it is manifest that these Burghers have an undue share in the representation of the town, and are invested with a power which neutralises the efforts of the larger and more intelligent portion of the community. Every Burgher resident is qualified to vote, irrespective of being a ratepayer or property owner within the municipal area.

11. Notwithstanding the evident desire of the Government to legislate solely in the interests of the Burghers, and impose undue burdens on the Uitlanders, there was still a hope that the declaration of the President on the 30th of December, 1896, had some meaning, and that the Government would duly consider grievances properly brought before its notice. Accordingly, in the early part of 1897 steps were taken to bring to the notice of the Government the alarming depression in the Mining Industry, and the reasons which, in the opinions of men well qualified to judge, had led up to it.

12. The Government at last appointed a Commission consisting of its own officials, which was empowered to inquire into the industrial conditions of the mining population, and to suggest such a scheme for the removal of existing grievances as might seem advisable and necessary.

13. On the 5th of August the Commission issued their report,

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in which the reasons for the then state of depression were fully set forth, and many reforms were recommended as necessary for the well-being of the community. Among them it will be sufficient to mention the appointment of an Industrial Board, having its seat in Johannesburg, for the special supervision of the Liquor Law, and the Pass Law, and to combat the illicit dealing in gold and amalgam.

14. The Government refused to accede to the report of the Commission, which was a standing indictment against its administration in the past, but referred the question to the Volksraad, which in turn referred it to a Select Committee of its own members. The result created consternation in Johannesburg, for, whilst abating in some trifling respects burdens which bore heavily on the mining industry, the Committee of the Raad, ignoring the main recommendations of the Commission, actually advised an increased taxation of the country, and that in a way which bore most heavily on the Uitlander. The suggestions of the Committee were at once adopted, and the tariff increased accordingly.

15. At the beginning of 1897 the Government went a step further in their aggressive policy towards the Uitlander, and attacked the independence of the High Court, which, until then, Your Majesty's subjects had regarded as the sole remaining safeguard of their civil rights. Early in that year Act No. 1 was rushed through the Volksraad with indecent haste. This high-handed Act was not allowed to pass without criticism ; but the Government, deaf to all remonstrance, threatened reprisals on those professional men who raised their voices in protest, and finally, on the 16th of February, 1898, dismissed the Chief Justice, Mr. J. G. Kotzé, for maintaining his opinions. His place was filled shortly afterwards by Mr. Gregorowski, the Judge who had been especially brought from the Orange Free State to preside over the trial of the Reform prisoners in 1896, and who, after passing of the Act above referred to, had expressed an opinion that no man of self-respect would sit on the Bench whilst that law remained on the Statute Book of the Republic. All the Judges at the time this law was passed condemned it in a formal protest, publicly read by the Chief Justice in the High Court, as a gross interference with the independence of that tribunal. That protest has never been modified or retracted, and of the five Judges who signed the declaration three still sit on the Bench.

16. The hostile attitude of the Government towards Your

Majesty's subjects has been accentuated by the building of forts not only around Pretoria, but also overlooking Johannesburg. The existence of these forts is a source of constant menace and irritation to British subjects, and does much to keep alive that race-feeling which the Government of this State professes to deprecate. This feeling of hostility has infected the general body of Burghers. Most noticeable is the antagonistic demeanour of the police and of the officials under whom they immediately act. The Uitlander petition.

17. The constitution and *personnel* of the police force is one of the standing menaces to the peace of Johannesburg. It has already been the subject of remonstrance to the Government of this Republic, but hitherto without avail. An efficient police force cannot be drawn from a people such as the Burghers of this State ; nevertheless, the Government refuses to open its ranks to any other class of the community. As a consequence, the safety of the lives and property of the inhabitants is confided in a large measure to the care of men fresh from the country districts, who are unaccustomed to town life and ignorant of the ways and requirements of the people. When it is considered that this police force is armed with revolvers in addition to the ordinary police truncheons, it is not surprising that, instead of a defence, they are absolutely a danger to the community at large.

17A. Trial by jury exists in name, but the jurors are selected exclusively from among the Burghers. Consequently in any case where there is the least possibility of race or class interests being involved there is the gravest reason to expect a miscarriage of justice.

18. Encouraged and abetted by the example of their superior officers, the police have become lately more aggressive than ever in their attitude towards British subjects. As, however, remonstrances and appeals to the Government were useless, the indignities to which Your Majesty's subjects were daily exposed from this source had to be endured as best they might. Public indignation was at length fully roused by the death at the hands of a police constable of a British subject named Tom Jackson Edgar.

19. The circumstances of this affair were bad enough in themselves, but were accentuated by the action of the Public Prosecutor, who, although the accused was charged with murder, on his own initiative reduced the charge to that of culpable homicide only, and released the prisoner on the recognisances of his comrades in the police force, the bail being fixed originally at £200, or less

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than the amount which is commonly demanded for offences under the Liquor Law, or for charges of common assault.

20. This conduct of a high State official caused the most intense feeling to prevail in Johannesburg. It was then thought that the time had arrived to take some steps whereby British subjects might for the future be protected from the indignities of which they had so long complained. It was therefore decided to make an appeal direct to Your Most Gracious Majesty, setting forth the grievances under which Your Majesty's subjects labour. A petition was accordingly prepared and presented to Your Majesty's Vice-Consul on the 24th of December, 1898, by some 4,000 or 5,000 British subjects. The behaviour of those present was orderly and quiet, and everything was done to prevent any infringement of the Public Meetings Law.

21. Owing to a technical informality, Your Majesty's Representative declined to transmit the petition to Your Majesty.

22. Immediately it became known that the petition would not go forward to Your Majesty, the Government ordered the arrest of Messrs. Clement Davies Webb and Thomas Robery Dodd, respectively the Vice-President and Secretary of the Transvaal Province of the South African League, under whose auspices the petition had been presented, on a charge of contravening the Public Meetings Act by convening a meeting in the open air. They were admitted to bail of £1,000 each, five times the amount required from the man charged with culpable homicide.

23. Thereupon Your Majesty's subjects, considering the arrest of these two gentlemen a gross violation of the rights of British subjects and an attempt to strain unduly against them a law which had already been represented to the Government as pressing most heavily upon the Uitlander population, decided to call a public meeting in an enclosed place, as permitted by the law, for the purpose of ventilating their grievances, and endorsing a fresh petition to Your Majesty.

24. Prior to holding the meeting the South African League ascertained from the Government, through the State Attorney, that, as in their opinion the meeting was perfectly legal in its objects, the Government had no intention of prohibiting it.

25. The meeting took place on the 14th of January, 1899, at the Amphitheatre, a large iron building capable of holding from 3,000 to 4,000 people. Prior to the advertised hour of opening an overwhelmingly large body of Boers, many of whom were police

in plain clothes and other employees of the Government, forced an entrance by a side door, and practically took complete possession of the building. They were all more or less armed, some with sticks, some with police batons, some with iron bars, and some with revolvers. The Uitlander petition.

26. The mere appearance of the speakers was the signal for disorder to commence; the Boers would not allow the meeting to proceed, but at once commenced to wreck the place, break up the chairs, and utilise the broken portions of them as weapons of offence against any single unarmed Englishman they could find.

27. There were present several Government officials, Justices of the Peace, and Lieutenants of Police in uniform, and the Commandant of Police, but they were appealed to in vain, and the work of destruction proceeded, apparently with their concurrence. Several Englishmen were severely injured by the attacks of the rioters, but in no case was an arrest effected, although offenders were pointed out and their arrest demanded; nor, indeed, was any attempt made by the police to quell the riot. Up to the present time no steps have been taken by the Government towards prosecuting the ringleaders of the disturbance, nor has a single arrest been made, notwithstanding the fact that the police officials who were present at the meeting admitted that some of the rioters were well known to them.

28. Those of Your Majesty's subjects who were present at the meeting were unarmed and defenceless, and seeing that the rioters had the support of the police and of some of the higher officials of the State, they refrained from any attempt at retaliation, preferring to rely upon more constitutional methods, and to lay a full statement of their grievances before Your Most Gracious Majesty.

29. The condition of Your Majesty's subjects in this State has indeed become well nigh intolerable.

30. The acknowledged and admitted grievances of which Your Majesty's subjects complain prior to 1895 not only are not redressed, but exist to-day in an aggravated form. They are still deprived of all political rights, they are denied any voice in the government of the country, they are taxed far above the requirements of the country, the revenue of which is misapplied and devoted to objects which keep alive a continuous and well-founded feeling of irritation, without in any way advancing the general interest of the State. Maladministration and peculation of public monies go hand in hand, without any vigorous measures being

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adopted to put a stop to the scandal. The education of Uitlander children is made subject to impossible conditions. The police afford no adequate protection to the lives and property of the inhabitants of Johannesburg ; they are rather a source of danger to the peace and safety of the Uitlander population.

31. A further grievance has become prominent since the beginning of the year. The power vested in the Government by means of the Public Meetings Act has been a menace to Your Majesty's subjects since the enactment of the Act in 1894. This power has now been applied in order to deliver a blow that strikes at the inherent and inalienable birthright of every British subject, namely, his right to petition his Sovereign. Straining to the utmost the language and the intention of the law, the Government have arrested two British subjects who assisted in presenting a petition to Your Majesty on behalf of 4,000 fellow-subjects. Not content with this, the Government, when Your Majesty's loyal subjects again attempted to lay their grievances before Your Majesty, permitted their meeting to be broken up and the objects of it to be defeated by a body of Boers, organised by Government officials, and acting under the protection of the police. By reason, therefore, of the direct, as well as the indirect, act of the Government, Your Majesty's loyal subjects have been prevented from publicly ventilating their grievances, and from laying them before Your Majesty.

32. Wherefore Your Majesty's humble petitioners humbly beseech Your Most Gracious Majesty to extend Your Majesty's protection to Your Majesty's loyal subjects resident in this State, and to cause an enquiry to be made into grievances and complaints enumerated and set forth in this humble petition, and to direct Your Majesty's Representative in South Africa to take measures which will secure the speedy reform of the abuses complained of, and to obtain substantial guarantees from the Government of this State for a recognition of their rights as British subjects.

And Your Most Gracious Majesty's petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray, &c., &c.

W. Wybergh, &c., P.O. Box 317,
Johannesburg, South African Republic,
And Others.

On March 27, a few days after the petition had been transmitted to Pretoria, the *Star* announced the fact and

gave a brief summary of its contents to the world; and from this day must be dated, so far as Johannesburg is concerned, the beginning of the crisis which ultimately led to war. By the petition, Johannesburg had publicly committed itself to an attempt to obtain Imperial intervention for the redress of grievances. At that moment the policy of the petitioners was one with which the community, as a whole, had by no means yet altogether identified itself. There were thousands who frowned upon the movement, because bitter recollection of repeated failures had made them sceptical of the success of any attempt to obtain the assistance of the Imperial Government, and in their view an abortive attempt would only disturb the community needlessly, and lead to a firmer riveting of the chains. Even among those who have fought and died for England in this war one could mention the names of men who, when the movement for appealing to the Imperial Government began, regarded it with suspicion if not with avowed hostility. There were others again who were deterred from expressing the sympathy they felt through fear of directors at home anxious only for their dividends. And no doubt there were thousands more who had become utterly sordid, and had lost, or were fast losing, their English hatred of subjection. At the moment when the movement started there was something like a "boom" in the market after a period of inactivity which had lasted ever since the Raid; and in the eyes of many it was more important that the rise in prices should not be checked by political disturbance than that Britons should be free. With the exception of the League, there was no political organisation; most of the natural leaders of the people were still, as members of the Reform Committee, bound by a pledge to abstain from politics, and the Public Meetings Law, and the active discouragement of timid directors afraid of incurring the hostility of the Government, had almost extinguished the habit of political discussion, and had thus deprived the people of one of the chief organs for the expression and development of public opinion. Of the great corporations which control the gold industry, the two houses of Eckstein and Farrar alone ob-

Hesitating attitude of large section of the community towards policy of the petition.

served an attitude of friendly neutrality. The Consolidated Goldfields bound their chief employés by contract to abstain from participation in politics, which meant, in practice, from criticism of the Boer Government.

The vested interests depending on the Boer system. The subsidised Press.

And while so much was made at the time by Boer sympathisers of the influence of the gold-mining houses which it was possible to represent as supporters of the Uitlander movement, it is curious that nothing was ever heard of the wealthy corporations which were "pro-Boer" by the very reason of their being—the Netherlands Railway Company, the Dynamite Company, the holders of the thousand and one concessions and monopolies, the foreign firms that secured contracts by virtue of their being non-British—all these were so much dead weight thrown into the scale against the agitation, and added their money and influence freely in opposition to the Uitlander cause. The large class, too, of those who directly profited by the Boer system—the salaried officials, the hangers-on of the illicit gold and illicit liquor trades, and of the secret service department—was actively opposed to the movement. It was from this class and from the politically indifferent floating population of "Peruvians," *i.e.*, Polish and Russian Jews, that the Transvaal officials secured the substratum of genuine signatures which underlay the pretended counter-petition of 23,000 Uitlanders, assuring Kruger of their satisfaction with the existing state of affairs. While money was lavished by the Boer Government on the counter-agitation, the expenses of the Uitlander movement were insignificant. The Government had at its disposal a subsidised Press; the Uitlander Press was self-supporting, and needed no subsidy. The most important of the Government organs, the *Standard and Diggers' News*, which received a subsidy of £12,000 a year, had for years been sedulously fostering dissension in the community, and by daily denunciation of "capitalism" had succeeded in instilling a spirit of distrust into a section of the workmen. Its columns were filled with unscrupulous attacks upon the leaders of the Uitlander movement, and even with incitements to personal violence. Dutch papers like the *Rand Post* were constantly clamouring that the only way to silence agitation, and teach

the Imperial Government to mind its business, was to shoot the Reformers. Government spies were everywhere noting down all who took part in the movement. The Imperial Government showed no signs of a serious intention to take up the Transvaal question. Little wonder that many men at first shrank from coming forward, and that the multitude, puzzled and suspicious, sat waiting upon events during the weeks immediately following the signing of the petition.

The negotiations with the leaders of the mining industry.

The petition was the lever which moved the Imperial Government to interest and activity in behalf of the British population in the Transvaal. It was not, however, the only, or even the principal, factor in determining the character and direction either of the agitation in Johannesburg, or of the Imperial intervention. The petition confined itself to a statement of grievances, the redress of which it prayed Her Majesty's Government to secure. It made no demand for a specific remedy. But there was no doubt either among the Uitlander community, or in the minds of the Imperial authorities, what that remedy should be. The circumstances which determined the franchise agitation in Johannesburg, and, to some extent, Sir A. Milner's attitude at Bloemfontein, sprang directly from the negotiations of the Transvaal Government with the heads of the mining industry.

The dynamite question. Mr. Lippert's proposals, February 1899.

In February, 1899, the Transvaal Government received Mr. Chamberlain's despatch protesting against President Kruger's proposal to extend the term of the dynamite monopoly for a further period of fifteen years, and declaring the monopoly an infringement of the London Convention. The concession was already in an awkward position. The prospect of an almost indefinite extension of this colossal swindle was too much even for the Volksraad, which began to cast favourable eyes upon the proposal of the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines to lend the Government £600,000 on easy terms to compensate the concessionaires, if the Government would cancel the monopoly and allow the importation of dynamite, subject to an import duty, which would yield a handsome revenue. In this quandary, Kruger bethought himself of a plan by which he might kill several birds with one stone. On the now trebly historic date, February 27,

Mr. Lippert, the original dynamite concessionaire, approached certain representatives of the mining industry on behalf of the Government with a series of proposals, in return for which the leaders of the mining industry were to sign a declaration expressing their satisfaction with the policy of the Government, deprecating political agitation, agreeing to support the Government in its attitude on the Coolies and Cape Boys questions and in its endeavours to secure a State loan, and declaring lastly their satisfaction with the arrangements of the dynamite monopoly. The essence of the bargain lay in the exchanging of valuable State property contained in the *bewaarplaatsen* for the capitalists' support of the dynamite concession. The rest—the proposals to appoint a Financial Adviser of European reputation, and to give the franchise (with the exception of the right to vote for the President) to the Uitlanders seven years after naturalisation —was, as far as Kruger was concerned, mere embroidery ; but by it he hoped to give the capitalists an excuse for formally dissevering themselves—alike from the Reform movement among the Uitlanders and from the Imperial Government, and to give a progressive and liberal tinge to what was at bottom a shady financial transaction. Thus by one stroke opposition in the Volksraad would be disarmed, the Reform movement damaged, and all ground for intervention cut away from under Mr. Chamberlain's feet. Unfortunately for President Kruger's plan, the capitalists with whom he negotiated were not the men to meet his advances in the spirit in which they were made. They welcomed his proposals as real measures of reform, which they were not, discussed them seriously, and, as was only natural in such circumstances, found them altogether illusory. Having assured themselves of the general support of the heads of their respective firms in Europe in endeavouring to promote a settlement, the representatives, Messrs. Brakhan (a German), Rouliot (a Frenchman), and Birkenruth, together with two other representatives of the Uitlander community, Messrs. Pierce and Pistorius, had an interview on March 9 with Dr. Leyds (who was temporarily in South Africa), Messrs. Reitz, Smuts, and Lippert.

Dr. J. W. Leyds.

Transvaal State Secretary, 1888-1898.
Transvaal Agent in Europe, 1898-1900.

Photo by Elliott & Fry

On March 12 Mr. Lippert communicated to them the definite proposals of the Government, together with the declaration quoted above. On March 27 the capitalist representatives replied in a long and statesmanlike letter addressed to Mr. Reitz.* After recounting the course of the negotiations and dealing with the more technical questions of the *bewaarplaatsen*, the Financial Adviser, and the proposed loan, the letter discusses the pledges demanded from the capitalists. With regard to the demand that they should discourage political agitation in the Press or through the League, the writers reply that they intend, if a settlement is arrived at, to declare their satisfaction and thus remove any ground for agitation in the Press, and that they are at all times willing to publicly repudiate any political organisation whose object is to stir up race feeling. But they cannot repudiate any legitimate representations which any section of the community may see fit to make in matters which concern them as inhabitants of the State. On the question of coloured immigration they explain that they cannot intervene, as the matter is governed by the Convention; but they suggest that the Government should secure their wishes in the matter as part of a general settlement with the Imperial Government. Acquiescence in the continuance of the dynamite monopoly could be agreed upon by them only as a condition of an amelioration of the general conditions affecting the whole Uitlander population, upon terms which that population would be prepared to accept. The principle of a monopoly which already costs the industry over £600,000 a year dead loss—a loss bound steadily to increase—without any corresponding benefit to the State, is one they cannot express approval of. In any case they insist that the Dynamite Company must strictly fulfil the terms of its contract, that it must reduce its price to 70*s.* a case, giving to the Government the 5*s.* royalty and the share of the profits to which it is entitled, and that there shall be no further extension of the unexpired period of the concession.

The reply of the mining representatives.

Lastly, as for the franchise, they add that that is the vital point upon which a permanent and peaceful settlement must

The franchise the vital point.

* C. 9345, p. 215.

hinge. While willing to accept and recommend the acceptance of any fair scheme of constitutional reform, they consider that such a scheme must first be approved by the unenfranchised community, whose rights, liberties, and privileges are directly affected. As representatives of business houses, they are not qualified to settle the question on behalf of the general body of Uitlanders, of whom they are in no sense the appointed representatives. The acquiescence of the Uitlander community must be obtained for the constitutional proposals of the Government before they could recommend to the industry to make the sacrifices involved in the other proposals of the Government.

The Franchise Memorandum.

With this letter they enclosed an expression of opinion on the franchise proposal of the Government which, with the consent of the Government, they had obtained from a number of representative members of the Uitlander community. This opinion, afterwards known as the "Franchise Memorandum," gave the keynote to the whole subsequent agitation for the franchise. The memorandum unhesitatingly condemned the proposal as useless on the grounds (1) that it gave no consideration to the term of residence already completed; (2) that even if it were passed by the Volksraad, the existing procedure, by which a two-thirds vote of the burghers was necessary to sanction any alteration in the franchise, made its eventual ratification almost impossible; (3) that the existing form of oath was humiliating and unnecessary, and that its proposed introduction into the Free State had been rejected on that very ground; (4) that it maintained the period of disqualification during which the Uitlander would have given up his own citizenship and received nothing in return, a prospect not made the more inviting by the experience the community had had in the past of rights legislated away just as they were on the point of maturing; (5) that it provided for no redistribution of seats. In view of these points the memorandum suggested that the most satisfactory course for the Government to pursue would be to restore and confirm the status prior to 1890, the year in which the restrictive franchise legislation had its beginning, and thus satisfy the indisputable claims of those who settled in the country under

certain conditions, viz., the prospect of attaining full citizen rights in five years, from the benefits of which they could not properly be excluded. In conclusion, the memorandum, which throughout was couched in the most moderate and conciliatory language, expressed satisfaction that the Government had frankly recognised the necessity of dealing with the question of the franchise, and the hope that even a few points of agreement might be found which would pave the way to an eventual complete settlement.

Kruger's disappointment. The negotiations disavowed, April 1899.

To President Kruger the answer of the capitalist representatives came as an unwelcome surprise. For once his "something for nothing" policy had failed completely. The representatives had discussed on their merits the various points that affected their interests, but had firmly declined to prejudice the cause of the Imperial Government or of the Uitlander community by declarations on matters that did not concern them as capitalists. Evidently there was no "business" to be done, and the only thing was to break off the negotiations, if possible, on some side issue not connected with the subject matter of the proposals, or even to deny that they had ever been entered upon by the Government. The negotiations had been, at the request of the Government, kept secret by the Johannesburg representatives, but rumours, originating in London and Pretoria, soon began to spread, and before the letter of March 27 had been answered by the State Secretary, an enterprising correspondent in Pretoria succeeded in purchasing a copy of it from a subordinate in a Government office, and published it at length in several papers in the Cape Colony. Mr. Reitz, in his reply of April 8, made this fact of publication the ground for an insinuation of bad faith against the representatives of the industry. As for the negotiations themselves, he declared that Mr. Lippert, in approaching the representatives of the industry, had acted entirely *suo motu* and not as agent of the Government, and that Dr. Leyds, Mr. Smuts, and himself had also taken part in the negotiations purely in their capacity as private individuals. Both as to the official character of the negotiations and as to the publication of the letter of March 27 the rejoinder of the mining repre-

sentatives was complete; and with a polite acknowledgment of the receipt of this rejoinder by the State Secretary, the negotiations came to an end.

Effect of the negotiations in rousing public interest. Kruger's speeches.

Their consequences, however, were far indeed from being at an end. The letter of March 27, on its publication, aroused the keenest interest in Johannesburg, and while the statesmanlike attitude of the mining representatives on the franchise question received the warm approval of all classes, the conviction rapidly grew that the public must declare itself where its larger interests were involved. Political feeling had already been awakened by the presentation of the petition, and interest in the franchise question had been deepened by a curious though characteristic step on the part of the President. On March 17, while the Lippert proposals were still under consideration in Johannesburg, Mr. Kruger addressed a meeting of burghers at Heidelberg, and announced his intention of submitting to the Volksraad the same meagre reform of the Franchise Law that had been suggested as one of the conditions of the agreement with the mining industry. A week later the speech was repeated at Rustenburg, and on April 1, a few days after the announcement of the fact that a petition to the Queen had been presented, the President hastened to Johannesburg and reiterated his pledges. When, then, it became known that the franchise question had been thrust by the Government into the negotiations with the mining industry, an independent committee was at once formed, and steps were taken to convene a public meeting for the discussion of the points at issue. As no suitable building was available in which the meeting could be held under the Public Meetings Act, application was made to the Government for permission to hold it in the open air. The reply of the State Secretary was an abrupt refusal; and as he had already, in the course of his correspondence with the industry, expressed approval of the suggestion that the question of the franchise should be referred to the public, his ill-considered action on this occasion did much to swell the already rising tide of indignation against the Government. It would appear that Mr. Reitz himself speedily realised his error, for a few days later, in conversation with a newspaper

correspondent from the Rand, he tried to soften the refusal by suggesting that, though the absence of a building made one great meeting impossible, there was no reason why a number of smaller meetings should not be held in which the community could give adequate expression to its views.

The mine meetings. The petition and franchise movements coalesce.

The suggestion, whether or not it was intended seriously by the State Secretary, did not fall on stony ground. On April 21 a meeting of working men was held on the Village Main Reef, at which resolutions were carried unanimously, declaring the conviction that no settlement of the political problem would be satisfactory to the Uitlanders which did not recognise as a fundamental principle the equal rights of all white inhabitants, and approving of the attitude of the industrial representatives, and in particular of the Franchise Memorandum as indicating the "irreducible minimum" of reform. This meeting proved to be the first of a series held all along the Reef. In their educative effect upon the public mind, in their unifying influence, and as evidence of political earnestness in the community, the mine meetings were far more valuable than any single gathering, however great, could ever have proved itself. They were essentially meetings of working men, but their dominant note throughout was appreciation of the loyal and public-spirited attitude of the industrial representatives and recognition of the fact that only by a united effort of both capital and labour could the political reforms, so vital to both, be secured. As the movement gathered strength and the political temperature rose, the resolutions passed at the Village Main Meeting were reinforced by others endorsing the petition to the Queen, while presently it became the habit to elect delegates from each gathering who should meet delegates from the other mines and consider what steps should be taken to obtain the necessary measures of reform —the germ from which the Uitlander Council was ultimately developed. The evidence which these meetings supplied of the determination of the people of the Rand to stand or fall by the petition and to make a final effort for emancipation had no little influence in awakening statesmen, both in South Africa and in England, to a realisation of the fact that a fresh

crisis had begun, and thus in setting at work the forces that led to the Conference at Bloemfontein.

Attitude of Johannesburg towards the Bloemfontein Conference. The meeting in the Wanderers' Hall.

The story of that Conference and of the abortive negotiations that followed is told in the ensuing chapters. Here it is only necessary to complete the tale of how a movement, initiated and conducted under enormous difficulties by a few earnest men, was carried to triumphant success in enlisting the support and enthusiasm of nearly the whole population of the Rand. On the eve of the Conference an *ad interim* reply to the petition, in which it was declared that Her Majesty's Government could not but express their general sympathy with the memorialists and that they earnestly desired to see a speedy and substantial change effected in their position, was received and published in Johannesburg. As the first public and official announcement that Her Majesty's Government viewed the petition seriously the reply was received with enthusiasm and won for the movement the allegiance of thousands who had hitherto stood aloof. The result of the Conference was of course awaited with the greatest interest and excitement. A few irreconcilables desired its failure, still more were prepared for that result, but the many were hopeful to the end; and when definite news of failure reached Johannesburg it sent a shock of surprise and alarm through the whole community. The only compensation was the evidence, contained in an official summary of the proceedings published immediately after the close of the Conference, of the strong and sympathetic attitude of the High Commissioner. To the multitude this was the first revelation of a great statesman on their side and the discovery set the seal upon their faith and enthusiasm. A great meeting in the town which had long been in contemplation, but had been postponed by reason of the Conference, was convened for the Saturday following its close (June 10), and the eager competition among citizens of every class to sign the requisition was an earnest of the new spirit which animated the people. The Government, alarmed at last and anxious now to be conciliatory, granted permission to hold the meeting in the Wanderers' Hall, the only suitable structure in the town, and there 5,000 people assembled and with

ardent and intense enthusiasm declared their determination to give their strenuous effort to the policy of Sir Alfred Milner and to make his proposals the irreducible minimum of their demands. At the same time a body of delegates were elected as representatives of the town who immediately afterwards met the delegates already chosen from the mines and constituted the body which in the course of the subsequent negotiations became so well known as the Uitlander Council.

Constancy of Johannesburg during the months of crisis. The exodus.

It was then the general belief in Johannesburg that the final crisis was near at hand, and after the many months of tension and excitement that had preceded, there were few who realised how little progress had been made with the task of educating the British public as to the real needs of the situation. During the weary months of fruitless negotiation that followed, while the process of education was being slowly completed, while British statesmen were tediously repeating that they had put their hands to the plough as if the mere phrase had the virtue of an army corps, and while they were living in a fool's paradise of peace where there was no peace, Johannesburg, which even its friends and leaders feared would prove fickle, clung with admirable constancy and fortitude to its purpose. More than once solutions seemed about to be pressed upon it which every Uitlander knew could be no solution; more than once there were indications that the Imperial Government was more anxious to secure a settlement on paper than in fact. Yet through every delay, through every disappointment, through continually increasing poverty and suffering from the stagnation of trade and the restriction of employment, the people of the Rand never lost their faith. As early as April an exodus began. After the Bloemfontein Conference it became serious. In September it developed mightily. And finally in October the Boer ultimatum brought to the remnants of the British community exile, with the certainty of eventual restoration under conditions of freedom and justice hitherto unknown.

CHAPTER X

THE BLOEMFONTEIN CONFERENCE

The policy of non-intervention.

EVER since President Kruger's rejection of the proposals for reform contained in Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of February 4, 1896, there had been continuous controversy between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal. But it was controversy arising solely out of the persistent attempts made by the Transvaal to override the provisions of the London Convention. There had been no attempt on the part of the Imperial Government to intervene on behalf of its Uitlander subjects in the internal affairs of the Republic. And serious as was the South African situation at the beginning of November, 1898, when Sir A. Milner left the Cape for a short visit to England, there seemed to be no immediate necessity for any change in the patient policy that had hitherto been pursued.

The situation in February 1899. Transvaal intrigues in Cape Colony.

It was a very different situation that faced Sir A. Milner when he landed again in Cape Town on February 14. The ill-treatment of the Cape Boys at Johannesburg, the Edgar case, the first Johannesburg petition and its rejection by Sir W. Butler, the consequent arrest of the promoters of the petition, and the violent breaking up by Government officials of the Amphitheatre meeting, had all taken place in the brief three months of his absence. The excitement over these events had not been confined to the Transvaal alone. In almost all the towns of Cape Colony and Natal meetings had been held, protesting against the continuation of the existing state of affairs in the Transvaal and demanding the intervention of the Imperial Government. And if English feeling in South Africa was excited, Dutch feeling was no less so. Among the extreme section of

Afrikanders everywhere a movement was on foot, not unlike the movement that followed the retrocession of the Transvaal in 1881, for the formation of a National League which should bind together all Afrikanders in strenuous opposition to any attempt of the Imperial Power to intervene in South African affairs. In Cape Colony the opposition had forced a redistribution measure on Mr. Schreiner, and elections for the newly-formed constituencies were imminent. Mr. Schreiner had throughout laid stress on his Imperialism, and Mr. Hofmeyr declared his affection for the British flag. But with a large section of their supporters it was otherwise. Disloyalty was openly talked, and in some districts secretly organised. Already in the previous year various emissaries from Pretoria, of whom the best known were Mr. Koos Smit, Commissioner of Railways, and Commandant Henning Pretorius, had been travelling through the colony and making inquiries as to the amount of aid that might be expected in case of a war with the Imperial Government. To what extent help was given towards the purchasing of arms and ammunition, and how far there was any definite organisation of Transvaal sympathisers in different districts with a view to rebellion, is a question on which little evidence has hitherto been produced. Certain it is that for at least a year preceding the outbreak of hostilities the Pretoria Government had its agents in the border districts of Cape Colony and Natal, who kept it regularly (though as the result proved not quite correctly) informed as to the readiness of the Dutch population to rise in arms.

Sir A. Milner realised at once that the long-impending crisis had come. Whether it wished or no the Imperial Government was now compelled to come to a decision. There were only two alternatives open to it—either to take up the cause of the British population of the Transvaal firmly, and insist that the equality of the Briton with the Boer should be acknowledged throughout South Africa, or else for good and all to abdicate its pretension to being the Paramount Power in South Africa. The Uitlanders, who had never recognised Sir W. Butler as in any sense representing the views of the Imperial Government, were engaged

Sir A. Milner decides to bring about intervention.

in signing another petition to the Queen. To refuse that petition meant to alienate in permanence not only the Uitlanders, but the whole British population of South Africa, who had made up their minds that the time had come for a final test of the quality of that Government from whose weakness and inconstancy they had suffered so often before. To accept it meant taking up the whole question of Transvaal misgovernment, and not desisting till a satisfactory solution had been found. Sir A. Milner decided to accept the petition, to secure its acceptance by the Imperial Government, and more than that, to make sure that on the part both of the British Government and of the British people the acceptance should be a real one, and that there should be no turning back. On the merits of the question, on the character and policy of the Transvaal Government, he had made up his mind already. It only remained to convince the Government at home and the British people as he had convinced himself. In a series of despatches sent during March and April,* dealing with the ill-treatment of Cape Boys, with the breaking up of the Amphitheatre meeting, with the negotiations between the Pretoria Government and the industrial representatives, with Mr. Conyngham Greene's interview with a deputation of working men, he set forth in the plainest language the insolence and bad faith of the Transvaal Government, and the thoroughly genuine and representative character of the Reform movement. Finally on May 4 he summed up the case for intervention in the following telegram, one of the most masterly State documents ever penned:—†

Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

"Having regard to critical character of South African situation and likelihood of early reply by Her Majesty's Government to Petition, I am telegraphing remarks which under ordinary circumstances I should have made by despatch. Events of importance have followed so fast on each other since my return to South Africa, and my time has been so occupied in dealing with each incident severally, that I have had no opportunity for reviewing the whole position.

"The present crisis undoubtedly arises out of the Edgar

* See C. 9345, pp. 104, 159, 183, 207, &c.

† C. 9345, p. 209.

incident. But that incident merely precipitated a struggle which was certain to come. It is possible to make too much of the killing of Edgar. It was a shocking and, in my judgment, a criminal blunder, such as would have excited a popular outcry anywhere. It was made much worse by the light way in which it was first dealt with by the Public Prosecutor and by the attitude of the Judge at the trial. By itself, however, it would not have justified, nor, in fact, provoked the present storm. But it happened to touch a particularly sore place. There is no grievance which rankles more in the breasts of the mass of the Uitlander population than the conduct of the police, who, while they have proved singularly incompetent to deal with gross scandals like the illicit liquor trade, are harsh and arbitrary in their treatment of individuals whom they happen to dislike, as must have become evident to you from the recurrent ill-treatment of coloured people. There are absolutely no grounds for supposing that the excitement which death of Edgar caused was factitious. It has been laid to the door of the South African League, but the officials of the League were forced into action by Edgar's fellow-workmen. And, the consideration of grievances once started by the police grievance, it was inevitable that the smouldering but profound discontent of the population who constantly find their affairs mismanaged, their protests disregarded, and their attitude misunderstood, by a Government on which they have absolutely no means of exercising any influence, should once more break into flame.

Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

"We have, therefore, simply to deal with a popular movement of a similar kind to that of 1894 and 1895 before it was perverted and ruined by a conspiracy of which the great body of the Uitlanders were totally innocent. None of the grievances then complained of, and which then excited universal sympathy, have been remedied, and others have been added. The case is much stronger. It is impossible to overlook the tremendous change for the worse which has been effected by the lowering of the status of the High Court of Judicature and by the establishment of the principle embodied in the new draft Grondwet that any Resolution of the Volksraad is equivalent to a law. The instability of the laws has always been one of the most serious grievances. The new Constitution provides for their permanent instability, the Judges being bound by their oath to accept every Volksraad Resolution as equally binding with a law passed in the regular

Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

form and with the provisions of the Constitution itself. The law prescribing this oath is one of which the present Chief Justice said that no self-respecting man could sit on the Bench while it was on the Statute Book. Formerly the foreign population, however bitterly they might resent the action of the Legislature and of the Administration, had yet confidence in the High Court of Judicature. It cannot be expected that they should feel the same confidence to-day. Seeing no hope in any other quarter, a number of Uitlanders who happen to be British subjects have addressed a Petition to Her Majesty the Queen. I have already expressed my opinion of its substantial genuineness and the absolute *bona fides* of its promoters. But the Petition is only one proof among many of the profound discontent of the unenfranchised population, who are a great majority of the white inhabitants of the State.

"The public meeting of 14th January was indeed broken up by workmen, many of them poor burghers, in the employment of the Government and instigated by Government officials, and it is impossible at present to hold another meeting of a great size. Open-air meetings are prohibited by law, and by one means or another all large public buildings have been rendered unavailable. But smaller meetings are being held almost nightly along the Rand and are unanimous in their demand for enfranchisement. The movement is steadily growing in force and extent.

"With regard to the attempts to represent that movement as artificial, the work of scheming capitalists or professional agitators, I regard it as a wilful perversion of the truth. The defenceless people who are clamouring for a redress of grievances are doing so at great personal risk. It is notorious that many capitalists regard political agitation with disfavour because of its effect on markets. It is equally notorious that the lowest class of Uitlanders, and especially the illicit liquor dealers, have no sympathy whatever with the cause of reform. Moreover, there are in all classes a considerable number who only want to make money and clear out, and who, while possibly sympathising with reform, feel no great interest in a matter which may only concern them temporarily. But a very large and constantly increasing proportion of the Uitlanders are not birds of passage; they contemplate a long residence in the country or to make it their permanent home. These people are the mainstay of the

Reform movement as they are of the prosperity of the country. They would make excellent citizens if they had the chance.

Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

"A busy industrial community is not naturally prone to political unrest. But they bear the chief burden of taxation; they constantly feel in their business and daily lives the effects of chaotic local legislation and of incompetent and unsympathetic administration; they have many grievances, but they believe all this could be gradually removed if they had only a fair share of political power. This is the meaning of their vehement demand for enfranchisement. Moreover, they are mostly British subjects, accustomed to a free system and equal rights; they feel deeply the personal indignity involved in position of permanent subjection to the ruling caste which owes its wealth and power to their exertion. The political turmoil in the Transvaal Republic will never end till the permanent Uitlander population is admitted to a share in the Government, and while that turmoil lasts there will be no tranquillity or adequate progress in Her Majesty's South African dominions.

"The relations between the British Colonies and the two Republics are intimate to a degree which one must live in South Africa in order fully to realize. Socially, economically, ethnologically, they are all one country, the two principal white races are everywhere inextricably mixed up; it is absurd for either to dream of subjugating the other. The only condition on which they can live in harmony and the country progress is equality all round. South Africa can prosper under two, three, or six Governments, but not under two absolutely conflicting social and political systems, perfect equality for Dutch and British in the British Colonies side by side with permanent subjection of British to Dutch in one of the Republics. It is idle to talk of peace and unity under such a state of affairs.

"It is this which makes the internal condition of Transvaal Republic a matter of vital interest to Her Majesty's Government. No merely local question affects so deeply the welfare and peace of her own South African possessions. And the right of Great Britain to intervene to secure fair treatment to the Uitlanders is fully equal to her supreme interest in securing it. The majority of them are her subjects, whom she is bound to protect. But the enormous number of British subjects, the endless series of their grievances, and the nature of those grievances, which are not less serious because they are not individually sensational,

Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

makes protection by the ordinary diplomatic means impossible. We are, as you know, for ever remonstrating about this, that, and the other injury to British subjects. Only in rare cases and only when we are very emphatic do we obtain any redress. The sore between us and the Transvaal Republic is thus inevitably kept up while the result in the way of protection to our subjects is lamentably small. For these reasons it has been, as you know, my constant endeavour to reduce the number of our complaints. I may sometimes have abstained when I ought to have protested from my great dislike of ineffectual nagging. But I feel that the attempt to remedy the hundred and one wrongs springing from a hopeless system by taking up isolated cases is perfectly vain. It may easily lead to war, but will never lead to real improvement.

"The true remedy is to strike at the root of all these injuries —the political impotence of the injured. What diplomatic protests will never accomplish, a fair measure of Uitlander representation would gradually but surely bring about. It seems a paradox but it is true that the only effective way of protecting our subjects is to help them to cease to be our subjects. The admission of Uitlanders to a fair share of political power would no doubt give stability to the Republic. But it would at the same time remove most of our causes of difference with it, and modify and in the long run entirely remove that intense suspicion and bitter hostility to Great Britain which at present dominates its internal and external policy.

"The case for intervention is overwhelming. The only attempted answer is that things will right themselves if left alone. But, in fact, the policy of leaving things alone has been tried for years, and it has led to their going from bad to worse. It is not true that this is owing to the Raid. They were going from bad to worse before the Raid. We were on the verge of war before the Raid, and the Transvaal was on the verge of revolution. The effect of the Raid has been to give the policy of leaving things alone a new lease of life, and with the old consequences.

"The spectacle of thousands of British subjects kept permanently in the position of helots, constantly chafing under undoubted grievances, and calling vainly to Her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's dominions. A certain section

of the Press, not in the Transvaal only, preaches openly and constantly the doctrine of a Republic embracing all South Africa, and supports it by menacing references to the armaments of the Transvaal, its alliance with the Orange Free State, and the active sympathy which in case of war it would receive from a section of Her Majesty's subjects. I regret to say that this doctrine, supported as it is by a ceaseless stream of malignant lies about the intentions of the British Government, is producing a great effect upon a large number of our Dutch fellow-colonists. Language is frequently used which seems to imply that the Dutch have some superior right even in this colony to their fellow-citizens of British birth. Thousands of men peaceably disposed, and, if left alone, perfectly satisfied with their position as British subjects, are being drawn into disaffection, and there is a corresponding exasperation on the side of the British. Sir A. Milner's telegram of May 4.

"I can see nothing which will put a stop to this mischievous propaganda but some striking proof of the intention of Her Majesty's Government not to be ousted from its position in South Africa. And the best proof alike of its power and its justice would be to obtain for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal a fair share in the Government of the country which owes everything to their exertions. It could be made perfectly clear that our action was not directed against the existence of the Republic. We should only be demanding the re-establishment of rights which now exist in the Orange Free State, and which existed in the Transvaal itself at the time of and long after the withdrawal of British sovereignty. It would be no selfish demand, as other Uitlanders besides those of British birth would benefit by it. It is asking for nothing from others which we do not give ourselves. And it would certainly go to the root of the political unrest in South Africa, and, though temporarily it might aggravate, it would ultimately extinguish the race feud which is the great bane of the country."

The most striking thing about the despatch is its absolute frankness. It represents exactly and fully the whole South African problem as it presented itself to Sir A. Milner's mind, and as he wished the British nation, all the world over, to understand it. It shows no trace of that official hypocrisy and self-deception that is so characteristic a feature of most of our public utterances. It makes no attempt at Sir A. Milner's frankness. The plea for delay.

veiling unpleasant truths. There are few men who in Sir A. Milner's peculiar position would have dared to speak as fearlessly as he did of disaffection in Cape Colony. Most men would have been only too glad to leave the unpleasant word unsaid, and to neglect the High Commissioner's duty under cover of the plea that a constitutional Governor is not supposed to criticise any section of the inhabitants of his colony. But Sir A. Milner was not afraid of taking the responsibility for his words or of facing the outcry they would raise both in England and South Africa among all the worthy people who preferred not to look facts in the face. All that concerned him was to convince those to whom the despatch was addressed that the case for intervention was indeed overwhelming, and that only the most resolute action could stay the drift of South African affairs towards civil war or else towards the slipping away of the Imperial supremacy. Subsequent events have shown that it was already too late to avert a desperate conflict. Yet Sir A. Milner judged rightly that the only chance, slight as it was, of permanently averting that conflict lay in taking advantage of the existing crisis to strike at the root of the evil by insisting on reform in the Transvaal. It has sometimes been said that all the British Government need have done was to wait for President Kruger's death, when things would have come right of themselves. That argument overlooks the fact that the longer the existing state of affairs had continued, the more bitter would have been the struggle and the more sharply accentuated the racial cleavage. And the leaders—the men of the Young Afrikander party—whom that struggle was bringing to the front as Kruger's destined successors would assuredly not have been less fanatical or less ambitious than he was.

The just ground for intervention.

The grounds on which Sir A. Milner based his demand for intervention were the broad grounds of justice, of national honour, and of national self-interest. The treatment of British subjects in the Transvaal was a violation of the rights that every freeman claims in a new country which he has contributed to make, as well as an infraction of the whole spirit of the Conventions. It was in itself an insult to

SIR ALFRED MILNER, G.C.M.G., K.C.B.,

HIGH COMMISSIONER, FEBRUARY, 1897.

From a Photograph specially taken for this work by Duffus, Cape Town

the Paramount Power, and in its consequences a menace to the very existence of the British Empire in South Africa. It was on these grounds—grounds that would have been equally applicable in any other part of the world and against any other State, whether bound to us by special agreement or not—that he appealed to the British nation to make the case of the Uitlanders their own, and not on any technical violations of the terms of the Convention. The London Convention limited and guided the ordinary relations of Great Britain towards the Transvaal. With the particular crisis that had arisen it had nothing to do, and to have based the claim for intervention upon it would have been neither straightforward nor logical.

Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of May 10.

On May 10 Mr. Chamberlain replied in a comprehensive despatch * traversing the whole ground covered by the Uitlanders' petition and by Sir A. Milner's despatches. The despatch begins by announcing the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take up the case of the petitioners. In four pages of Bluebook Mr. Chamberlain summarized the history of the Uitlander grievances from the date when the Uitlanders laid down their arms at the instance of Her Majesty's High Commissioner, and the President on his side promised to "forget and forgive." The financial grievances are put first, but the despatch emphatically asserts that Her Majesty's Government attach much less importance to them than to those "which affect the personal rights of the Uitlander community, and which place them in a condition of political, educational and social inferiority to the Boer inhabitants of the Transvaal, and even endanger the security of their lives and property. It is in this respect that the spirit, if not the letter, of the Convention has been most seriously infringed." The educational grievance, the refusal to grant Johannesburg a proper municipality, the refusal to establish an Advisory Board for the Rand as recommended by the 1897 Industrial Commission, are then reviewed before the despatch passes on to the more recent instances of arbitrary action, the ill-treatment of coloured British subjects, the Edgar case and the Amphitheatre meeting. Finally

* C. 9345, p. 226.

Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of May 10.

the despatch deals with the recent legislation by which the Uitlander has been subjected to "new liabilities, unknown when the Convention was signed, if he appeals to public opinion or attempts to bring his complaints to the notice of the Government," and quotes the instances of the new Press Law, the Aliens Expulsion Law, and the law enforcing the subordination of the judges to resolutions of the Volksraad. The last page of the despatch states the conclusions of Her Majesty's Government upon this investigation.

"It results from this review of the facts and conditions on which the Petition is founded, as well as from the information derived from your despatches and from other official sources, that British subjects and the Uitlanders generally in the South African Republic have substantial grounds for their complaints of the treatment to which they are subjected.

"It is fair to assume that these complaints are directed not so much against individual cases of hardship and injustice, which may occur in even the best governed States, as against the system under which the sufferers are debarred from all voice in the legislation under which such cases are possible, and all control of the Administration through the inefficiency of which they occur. They may be summarized in the statement that under present conditions, all of which have arisen since the Convention of 1884 was signed, the Uitlanders are now denied that equality of treatment which that instrument was designed to secure for them.

"The conditions subsisting in the South African Republic are altogether inconsistent with such equality, and are in striking contrast to those subsisting in all British colonies possessing representative institutions, where white men of every race enjoy equal freedom and equal justice, and new-comers are, after a reasonable period of residence, admitted to full political rights.

"In the Orange Free State, where similar privileges are conceded to all aliens resident in the Republic, the Dutch burgher and the foreign immigrant who enjoy the hospitality of the State live in harmony and mutual confidence; and the independence of the Republic is secured as well by the contentment and loyalty of all its citizens as by the good relations which prevail between its Government and those of other parts of South Africa.

"Unfortunately the policy of the South African Republic has

been conducted on very different lines, and but for the anxiety of Her Majesty's Government to extend every consideration to a weaker State which in recent years has had just reason to complain of the action of British subjects, and may therefore be naturally prone to suspicion and indisposed to take an impartial view of the situation, the state of affairs must have led to the most serious protest and remonstrance.

Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of May 10.

"Recognising, however, the exceptional circumstances of the case, Her Majesty's Government have refrained since their despatch of the 4th February, 1896,* from any pressure on the Government of the South African Republic except in cases in which there has been a distinct breach of the provisions of the Convention of 1884; and they have sincerely hoped that the Government of the Republic would voluntarily meet the expectations raised by the President, and would take the necessary steps to secure that willing loyalty of all the inhabitants of the State which would be the best guarantee for its security and independence.

"They are most unwilling to depart from their attitude of reserve and expectancy, but having regard to the position of Great Britain as the Paramount Power in South Africa, and the duty incumbent upon them to protect all British subjects residing in a foreign country, they cannot permanently ignore the exceptional and arbitrary treatment to which their fellow-countrymen and others are exposed, and the absolute indifference of the Government of the Republic to the friendly representations which have been made to them on the subject.

"They still cherish the hope that the publicity given to the present representations of the Uitlander population, and the fact, of which the Government of the South African Republic must be aware, that they are losing the sympathy of those other States which, like Great Britain, are deeply interested in the prosperity of the Transvaal, may induce them to reconsider their policy, and, by redressing the most serious of the grievances now complained of, to remove a standing danger to the peace and prosperity not only of the Republic itself, but also of South Africa generally.

"Her Majesty's Government earnestly desire the prosperity of the South African Republic. They have been anxious to avoid any intervention in its internal concerns, and they may

* No. 220 in [C. 7933] February 1896.

Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of May 10.

point out in this connection that if they really entertained the design of destroying its independence, which has been attributed to them, no policy could be better calculated to defeat their object than that which, in all friendship and sincerity, they now urge upon the Government of the South African Republic, and which would remove any pretext for interference by relieving British subjects of all just cause of complaint. With the earnest hope of arriving at a satisfactory settlement, and as a proof of their desire to maintain cordial relations with the South African Republic, Her Majesty's Government now suggest, for the consideration of President Kruger, that a meeting should be arranged between his Honour and yourself for the purpose of discussing the situation in a conciliatory spirit, and in the hope that you may arrive, in concert with the President, at such an arrangement as Her Majesty's Government could accept and recommend to the Uitlander population as a reasonable concession to their just demands, and the settlement of the difficulties which have threatened the good relations which Her Majesty's Government desire should constantly exist between themselves and the Government of the South African Republic.

"If the President should be disposed favourably to entertain this suggestion, you are authorised to proceed to Pretoria to confer with him on all the questions raised in this despatch.

"Her Majesty's Government desire that the British Agent at Pretoria should communicate a copy of the Petition and of this despatch to the Government of the South African Republic, and also communicate a copy of this despatch to the petitioners."

Neither this despatch nor Sir A. Milner's were made public at the time. Together with the whole bundle of correspondence and controversy over the grievances of the Uitlanders and the political situation from the middle of 1897 onwards they were kept back till after the failure of the Bloemfontein Conference. On May 24, however, Sir A. Milner, with Mr. Chamberlain's consent, communicated to the petitioners the general sympathy of Her Majesty's Government with their views, and its earnest desire to see a speedy and substantial change effected in their position.

In the conclusion of his despatch Mr. Chamberlain had suggested that a personal meeting between Sir A. Milner and President Kruger at Pretoria would afford the best chance of

a friendly settlement. Quite independently of Mr. Chamberlain, a formal proposal for a conference, not at Pretoria but at Bloemfontein, was presented to the High Commissioner on the very day that Mr. Chamberlain's despatch was sent. The scheme of which this proposal was the outcome had been maturing for some time past in the minds of the leading men of the Afrikander party in Cape Colony, and the unexpected success of Mr. Schreiner's ministry in securing a working majority in the partial elections in April afforded a reasonable hope of their securing its realisation. The leading idea of the scheme was to bring the Afrikander party in Cape Colony and the Free State into the negotiations between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal, and thus make the Transvaal question not an Imperial but a South African question. Mr. Schreiner and his colleagues realised, as Kruger did not realise, the gravity of the situation. They knew that Sir A. Milner was determined to secure redress of the Uitlander grievances, and they feared that, sooner than tolerate any intervention in their internal affairs, the Boers would go to war, with the inevitable result of sacrificing their own independence and ruining the nationalist cause in South Africa. At all hazards they wished to avoid the calamity of war, and they believed they could best achieve that object by obtaining control of the negotiations and preventing the High Commissioner acting independently. Their first hope, that of asserting their wishes in virtue of their position as the ministry in power at the Cape, had failed by the consistent manner in which Sir A. Milner kept separate his functions as Governor of Cape Colony and as High Commissioner of South Africa. They now endeavoured to secure a footing in the negotiations in order to thwart what they considered a dangerous policy.

The proposed Conference. Origin of the idea.

The scheme originally thought of in April for checking or anticipating Sir A. Milner's action was that of a conference of all the South African states and colonies at which Kruger might be induced by those whom he regarded as his friends to make such concessions as might suffice to disarm public opinion in England, weaken the Uitlander agitation, and thus on both sides cut away the ground under Sir Alfred's

The scheme of an interstate conference. Its failure.

feet. The scheme fell through. Sir A. Milner maintained that the Imperial Government should be represented at the Conference. To this stipulation Mr. Schreiner was ready to agree. But the other parties to the scheme were unwilling, and Kruger, for his part, insisted that in any case he would have no discussion of the internal affairs of the Transvaal. Here, as throughout the whole course of the subsequent negotiations, Kruger's obstinacy wrecked the best laid plans of his would-be saviours. The inter-state conference having failed, the next best course was to get the Free State to act the part of honest broker between the disputants. Mr. Schreiner had, at the time, a high opinion of President Steyn's moderation and good sense, and thought that he might be made to play the same distinguished part as was once played by President Brand in the negotiations preceding the Pretoria Convention. All that was necessary to give President Steyn a foothold in the negotiations was for him to invite President Kruger and the High Commissioner to meet at Bloemfontein. Accordingly Mr. Schreiner urged President Steyn to issue an invitation to both parties for such a conference. The following extract from a letter from Dr. Te Water to Mr. Steyn, dated May 8, throws an interesting light on the view taken by his section of the Afrikander party of the objects to be achieved by the proposed Conference :—

Mr. Schreiner wishes President Steyn to mediate. Dr. Te Water's letter.

"Circumstances appear to me now to be such that our friends in Pretoria must be yielding ; with their friends at the head of the Government here, they have a better chance that reasonable propositions made by them will be accepted than they would have had if we had been unsuccessful at the late elections and our enemies were advisers. Schreiner, who knows more than any one of us, feels strongly that things are extremely critical. Telegrams from people in London whom he thoroughly trusts, such as J. H.'s best friends, received by him on Saturday and this morning, strengthen him in his opinion. We must now play to win time. Governments are not perpetual, and I pray that the present team, so unjustly disposed towards us, may receive their reward before long. Their successors, I am certain, will follow a less hateful policy towards us."

In what sense Dr. Te Water desired the Transvaal to yield is best illustrated by a sentence from another letter of his, written shortly afterwards: "Frankly, now is the time for yielding a little, though one may tighten the rope again later." President Steyn willingly took to the scheme, President Kruger's assent was secured by him, and on May 9 things were sufficiently advanced for Mr. Hofmeyr to sound Sir A. Milner on the subject. Sir Alfred discussed the matter in a friendly spirit. Accordingly, on the next day Mr. Schreiner was able to present a telegram from President Steyn, formally proposing that a meeting should take place at Bloemfontein, at which he himself might or might not take part, as the parties desired. Sir A. Milner knew well enough the object with which this proposal had been sprung upon him. At the same time he had hopes that some good might come out of a personal conference with President Kruger, and was thus inclined to regard the suggestion favourably. Before replying definitely, however, he communicated with Mr. Chamberlain, who replied that the despatch of May 10, which was already on its way, contained a proposal for a personal meeting. He also instructed the High Commissioner to reply that for many reasons a meeting at Pretoria or Cape Town would have been preferable, but that he was not disposed to press the point. Sir Alfred communicated these instructions through Mr. Schreiner to Mr. Steyn, who forwarded them to President Kruger. Kruger replied with a somewhat bad grace that he would come and discuss any questions excepting those that touched the independence of the Republic. On this footing, then, the arrangements were completed and the Conference fixed for May 31.

A Conference at Bloemfontein agreed upon.

On May 22 Sir A. Milner telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain for some indication of the line he was to take. The policy he himself suggested was to put the Uitlander question in its broadest aspect in the foreground, and insist on some substantial and immediate grant of representation. A five years' retrospective franchise, and at least one-fifth of the number of seats in the Volksraad to be given to the Rand, were the terms he proposed to put forward. Failing their

Sir A. Milner's policy.

acceptance, he would suggest municipal autonomy for the Rand. If the main question could be satisfactorily disposed of in either of these ways it might be possible to arrive at a basis for the settlement of other outstanding questions, such as the dynamite, Cape Boys, Indians, etc. Before this telegram reached Mr. Chamberlain, the latter had already drawn up his own suggestions, which were substantially identical with Sir A. Milner's. The fact is that for men who had carefully and intelligently followed the whole course of events in the Transvaal there could be no two opinions as to the best means of securing a peaceful settlement. The root of the whole grievance in the Transvaal was the refusal to grant equal political rights. It was the sense of inequality, of subordination, that rankled in the minds of the Uitlander community far more than the particular instances of corruption or oppression. The only real remedy lay in insisting on the recognition of the principle of equality, either by admission of the Uitlanders to the general franchise, or by the grant to them of special powers for their own district.

Sir A. Milner's solution universally recognised.

The proposal Sir A. Milner intended to put forward was no new solution of his own inventing. It was the solution demanded by the Uitlanders at all their meetings; it was the solution that Sir H. de Villiers and Mr. Merriman alike endeavoured to impress upon the Free State; it was the solution advocated by General Joubert and the few real Progressives that survived in the Transvaal. Even the President, though he was determined to concede no real equality, saw that it was on the question of the franchise that the struggle would come, and that it was in connection with the franchise that he would have to pretend to make some concessions. Nor was the precise term of five years one evolved from the High Commissioner's inner consciousness. It was the old term before Kruger introduced his mischievous legislation in 1890; it was the term suggested by the "Franchise Memorandum;" it had since been advocated by the Johannesburg press; it was the term Mr. Schreiner had suggested before the Raid Commission of Inquiry; it was the term that Sir H. de Villiers mentioned in his letters. In fact, even before Sir A. Milner went to

Bloemfontein the five years' franchise was by common consent of all parties treated as the standard and touchstone of political equality. Few people in England realised sufficiently, either at the time of the Conference or during the subsequent negotiations, what a very definite meaning British South Africans attached to the unrestricted five years' franchise, and to what an extent it stood in their minds as the symbol of a definite policy—the policy of equal rights. It was something differing totally in kind, and not merely in degree, from seven year franchises surrounded by elaborate pitfalls.

Sir A. Milner's attitude in going to Bloemfontein.

It was to advocate this perfectly definite and universally-recognised solution that Sir Alfred went to the Conference. It was a solution in itself eminently moderate and reasonable. Its acceptance would in no way have brought about a sudden and revolutionary transference of power from the Boers to the Uitlanders, and yet at the same time the Uitlander community would have welcomed it as a recognition of the principle for which they contended. It is true that to accept it meant for President Kruger a complete change in the whole spirit of his policy. But it was nothing less than such a complete change that Sir Alfred was prepared to acquiesce in. If by earnest and conciliatory argument he could persuade the President to make this change, well and good; if not, the Imperial Government would have to make its own proposals for the removal of the grievances under which the Uitlanders suffered, and enforce them by any means in its power. Sir A. Milner went, not to ask for a favour from President Kruger, but to offer him one last opportunity of extricating himself from the position into which his misguided policy had brought him. The proposal he intended to make was one which admitted of no further reduction, and which could not be bargained for by concessions in other matters. It was in itself a compromise. For by it the Imperial Government on the one hand waived its right to demand immediate and substantial redress of the specific grievances of its subjects, while the Uitlanders, on the other hand, resigned their claims as British citizens for the uncertain prospect of

fighting their own battles as burghers of the Transvaal Republic.

Kruger's attitude. His reluctance. His determination to bargain.

Very different was the frame of mind with which President Kruger visited Bloemfontein. He went because his friends and advisers warned him that the situation was serious, and urged that a conference was the best means by which they might bring their weight to bear in his favour, and by which the impending crisis might be averted or indefinitely postponed. But he went reluctantly. His attitude was not unlike that of some despotic old manufacturer going to confer with the executive of an aggressive trades-union. He neither recognised the right of the Uitlanders to claim citizenship, nor of the High Commissioner to intervene in his affairs, but as a practical man he saw that it was better to negotiate than to provoke serious trouble. After all he might not come off much the worse for negotiating. The High Commissioner had evidently set his mind on getting a reduction of the franchise, and would probably be correspondingly indifferent to other points. There were several things Kruger had long been aiming at: the incorporation of Swaziland, the way down to the sea that Lord Rosebery had blocked by annexing Zambaansland, some formal recognition of his sovereign status, even a modification of the Convention, if that were possible. Some, perhaps all, of these things he might by skilful bargaining secure in exchange for a small reduction in the franchise. A genuine throwing open of the citizenship, an acknowledgment of the right of the Uitlanders as a body to have a voice in the State, and ultimately even a voice in some proportion to their numerical strength, was a thing he never for a moment contemplated. If he had known that it was that acknowledgment, and nothing less, that Sir A. Milner was prepared to accept, he would never have come to Bloemfontein.

President Steyn.

The attitude of the subsidiary actors in the great drama that opened with the Bloemfontein Conference and closed with the annexation of the Republics is hardly less interesting than that of the principals. President Steyn's vanity was flattered by the thought of repeating the *rôle* of President

Brand on a more dignified and courtly scale. And, in so far as it might tend to magnify his importance in the eyes of South Africa, he was anxious that the Conference should be a success. He was inclined to believe what his friends at Cape Town told him of the seriousness of the situation, and he was ready to urge Kruger, with such firmness as he was capable of, to make some slight concession to the Uitlanders, and reform some of the worst abuses of his government. But with the fundamental objects of Kruger's policy he was entirely at one. The political pupil of Borckenhagen was the very embodiment of militant Young Afrikanderdom, and an English education had in no way modified his anti-British sentiments. He was no more capable of acting the "honest broker" than Reitz or Smuts themselves. He was bound hand and foot to the support of Kruger's policy, not only by the closer union treaty of 1897, but by the more intangible bonds that lay in their mutual understanding that Kruger would recommend him for the succession to the presidency of the united Republics.

Mr. Abraham Fischer. His mischievous influence.

Even more militant an Afrikander at heart was Mr. Abraham Fischer of the Free State Executive Council. Both before, and still more after, the Conference, Mr. Fischer acted as chief go-between and mediator between Kruger on the one hand and Steyn and the Cape Afrikanders on the other. He had the reputation of being a man of progressive and enlightened views. None could discourse more eloquently on Kruger's obstinacy and political shortsightedness, or on the necessity of preserving peace at all hazards. Not only Mr. Schreiner and his colleagues, but even for a while Sir A. Milner himself looked to him as their best helper in the cause of peace. Unfortunately in his case nationalist prejudices proved far more deeply ingrained than liberal ideals. The part played by him in the negotiations was altogether mischievous. At first, no doubt, he was willing to urge Kruger to make some slight concessions. But when once he realised that the Imperial Government would accept nothing less than a fair franchise, he threw himself unreservedly on the side of the war party. Towards his Cape friends he continued to pose as the earnest

advocate of peace. But the real object of his journeyings backwards and forwards between Bloemfontein and Pretoria all through the summer of 1899 was not to induce Kruger to be reasonable, but to make sure that the Free State should throw its lot in with the Transvaal. It was Mr. Fischer who overcame President Steyn's wavering scruples about the advisability of unconditionally pledging the Free State to join in the war, and who thus deliberately compassed the destruction of a flourishing little State.

The Cape Afrikanders. Letter of Sir H. de Villiers.

The motives of the Cape Afrikanders in bringing about the Conference have been touched upon already. All the more eminent men among them—Mr. Schreiner, Sir H. de Villiers, Mr. Hofmeyr, Mr. Merriman—agreed in their disapproval of President Kruger's policy towards the Uitlanders and of his attitude towards the Imperial Government. No severer condemnation of the Transvaal attitude could well be found than is contained in the statesmanlike letter written by Sir H. de Villiers to President Steyn on May 21 :—

"My Dear President,—I must heartily congratulate you on having succeeded so far as to induce the Governor and President Kruger to arrange for a meeting at Bloemfontein. . . . I sometimes despair of peace in South Africa when I see how irritating and unjust the Press is on the one side, and how stubborn the Transvaal Government is on the other. On my recent visit to Pretoria I did not visit the President as I considered it hopeless to think of making any impression on him, but I saw Reitz, Smuts, and Schalk Burger, who, I thought, would be amenable to argument, but I fear that either my advice had no effect on them, or else their opinion had no weight with the President. I urged upon them to advise the President to open the Volksraad with promises of a liberal franchise and drastic reforms. . . . The franchise proposal made by the President seems to be simply ridiculous. I am quite certain that if in 1881 it had been known to my fellow Commissioners that the President would adopt his retrogressive policy, neither President Brand nor I would ever have induced them to consent to sign the Convention. They would have advised the Secretary of State to let matters revert to the condition in which they were before peace was concluded ; in other words to recommence the war. I enclose herewith an extract from the English Act of 1870 in regard to naturalization, which I have altered only

so as to make it apply to the Transvaal. . . . An offer by the Transvaal to accept the English law with all its restrictions could not possibly be refused. . . . If the five years' term were offered by the Transvaal, with a retrospective operation, the Uitlanders would be bound to take it, subject to the restrictions. I fear there would always still be a danger of the Volksraad revoking the gift before it has come into operation. The recent law revoking the franchise given to persons who were actively loyal during the Jameson Raid, if the telegraphic reports are correct, is a most ill-advised business. . . . I have always been a well-wisher to the Republic, and if I had any influence with the President I would advise him no longer to sit on the boiler to prevent it from bursting. Some safety-valves are required for the activities of the new population. In their irritation they abuse the Government, often unjustly, in the Press, and send petitions to the Queen ; but that was only to be expected. Let the Transvaal Legislature give them a liberal franchise and allow them local self-government for their towns and some portion of the discontent will be allayed. . . . I feel sure that, having used your influence to bring him and Sir Alfred together, you will also do your best to make your efforts in favour of peace successful. I feel sure also that Sir Alfred is anxious to make his mission a success, but there can be no success unless the arrangement arrived at is a permanent one and not merely to tide over immediate difficulties. Very sincerely yours,

"J. H. De Villiers."

Letter of Mr. Merriman.

The concluding sentence emphasises the very point on which Sir Alfred Milner's whole policy was based. Hardly less striking is a passage from a letter written a few days after by Mr. Merriman to Mr. Fischer, though it may be noted that Mr. Merriman, unlike the Chief Justice, affected to consider the Uitlander agitation as mainly artificial, and urged the retention of the peculiar form of oath which British Uitlanders considered offensive :—

"I most strongly urge you to use your utmost influence to bear on President Kruger to concede some colourable measure of reform, not so much in the interests of outsiders as in those of his own State. Granted that he does nothing. What is the future ? His Boers, the backbone of the country, are perishing off the land ; hundreds have become impoverished loafers, landless

hangers-on of the town population. In his own interests he should recruit his Republic with new blood—and the sands are running out. I say this irrespective of agitation about Uitlanders. The fabric will go to pieces of its own accord unless something is done. Upon this point every one who wishes well to the Republican cause is agreed. . . . A moderate franchise reform and municipal privileges would go far to satisfy any reasonable people, while a maintenance of the oath ought to be a sufficient safeguard against the swamping of the old population. President Kruger should reflect that nine out of ten people that receive the franchise will be supporters of the Republic in which they will have an interest, and that he will, by granting liberal reforms, disarm all the opposition that must be as distasteful to him as it is to his friends, just because they cannot help feeling that there is some real ground behind the artificial agitation that is so sedulously provoked.

"Try and persuade President Kruger to confer a benefit on the whole of South Africa by granting a broad measure of reform, and you will have done the best day's work any statesman ever did in South Africa."

Genuineness of Cape statesmen's efforts for peace. Their ineffectiveness.

Of the genuineness of the desire of the Cape Afrikanders for peace there can be no doubt. Some of them, like Mr. Schreiner and Sir H. de Villiers, were mainly interested in the welfare of South Africa as a whole; others, like Mr. Hofmeyr, in the welfare of the constitutional Afrikander party; some, again, were solely concerned for the future prospects of the Republican dream of ousting British supremacy from South Africa. But all alike hoped for peace, and strove earnestly to preserve it. Unfortunately the methods they pursued were mistaken and ineffectual. Their secret entreaties and remonstrances were treated with contemptuous indifference at Bloemfontein and Pretoria. Kruger was convinced that the mass of the Dutch colonials—the men with the rifles—would be with him, and the hesitation of their leaders to proclaim their real views aloud only confirmed his conviction. The Cape Afrikanders throughout the negotiations, with their secret pleadings and unsuccessful manœuvres, resemble nothing so much as some chorus of ineffective old men in Greek tragedy. We shall see them in the succeeding chapters, now in secret lamenting their hero's madness, and

counselling prudence in rhythmic platitudes, now in public defending the justice of his cause and denouncing the conduct of his adversaries—unable alike by remonstrance or by denunciation to avert the impending catastrophe.

Sir A. Milner arrives at Bloemfontein May 30.

On May 29 Sir Alfred Milner left Cape Town accompanied by the Imperial Secretary, Mr. G. V. Fiddes, and by his Military Secretary, Colonel Hanbury-Williams, and arrived at Bloemfontein on the following day, where he met with a cordial welcome. President Steyn, whatever his other defects as an intermediary, proved himself an excellent host, and nothing was left undone that might conduce to the minor amenities of the Conference. On the afternoon of May 31 the Conference opened * in the new offices of the Railway Department. Mr. Kruger had come accompanied by Messrs. A. D. Wolmarans and Schalk Burger, of the Executive Council, and by Mr. Smuts, the State Attorney. Sir Alfred had not responded to President Steyn's offer to take a part in the negotiations, but in compliment to the Free State he had suggested that Mr. Fischer should act as interpreter. At the close of the Conference Sir Alfred specially expressed his satisfaction with the able and conscientious manner in which Mr. Fischer discharged his important duties. The praise was no doubt justified, but only as far as the actual meetings were concerned. Outside the Conference Mr. Fischer's influence was very far from making towards a satisfactory solution of the crisis.

First day. Sir A. Milner states his object.

Sir Alfred plunged straight into the heart of his subject by stating clearly the general object and scope of the Conference from his point of view. The number of open questions between the two Governments was steadily increasing, and the tone of the controversy was in consequence becoming more acute. Public opinion on both sides was getting irritated, a fact which seriously increased the difficulty of coming to an amicable arrangement. It was a deplorable situation, and it would not improve matters to discuss single points at this juncture. The root of the whole trouble lay in the policy pursued by the Transvaal towards the Uitlander

* For the full account of the proceedings of the Conference see Blue-book C. 9404.

population. A better state of affairs could only be brought about by a change in that policy. To quote Sir Alfred's own words:—

"It is my strong conviction that if the Government of the South African Republic could now, before things get worse, of its own motion change its policy towards the Uitlanders and take measures calculated to content the reasonable people among them, who, after all, are a great majority, such a course would not only strengthen the independence of the Republic, but it would make such a better state of feeling all round that it would become far easier to settle outstanding questions between the two Governments. I do not say we could settle them all at once, but I think we could settle most of them, and that we should be able to discuss all other questions in a spirit much more favourable for their settlement; and that is the reason why I mention this question first. I know that the citizens of the South African Republic are intensely jealous of British interference in their internal affairs. What I want to impress upon the President is that if the Government of the South African Republic of its own accord, from its own sense of policy and justice, would afford a more liberal treatment to the Uitlander population this would not increase British interference, but enormously diminish it. If the Uitlanders were in a position to help themselves they would not always be appealing to us under the Convention."

The President replies. He cannot let his burghers be swamped.

The President replies by expressing his readiness to discuss matters, and even to accept friendly hints on internal affairs. He is ready to give concessions as far as practicable, and in fact has done so. The statements contained in the Uitlander petition are untrue. He hopes to convince the High Commissioner both of this fact and of the danger to his independence if he grants too much. As to the franchise, his position is a peculiar one. In other countries immigrants bear only a slight proportion to the old population, whereas in the Transvaal they have been forced to take special precautions to avoid being swamped.

"His Excellency understands that if those who rushed in speedily get a vote equal to our burghers, and they can vote in the Volksraad, then in a very short time those who are brought in can turn the laws topsy-turvy, and do as they like, and with that

my independence would fall, in that they could make laws as they liked, and the burghers would be crushed out in that way, and that is why they are so strict on that point. . . . You must remember also, on this subject, that the burghers in our Republic are our soldiers, who must protect the land, and that we have told these men to come and fight when we have had difficulties with the Kaffirs. They wanted the vote, but they would not come and fight.* Those who were willing to help obtained the franchise, but it appears that many do not want to have it."

Discussion on the franchise.

The fallacy underlying the President's main argument is quickly taken up by Sir Alfred, who shows that there is no question of swamping the old burghers and turning the laws topsy-turvy, but only of giving some reasonable measure of representation to the Uitlander majority. At present the Uitlanders have not one single member to represent their feelings in the Volksraad, and the existing franchise law is such that no one would dream of endeavouring to get naturalised under it. The President does not attempt to reply directly to the argument, but retorts that many who had become naturalised burghers before the annexation under the old law preferred to remain British subjects after the retrocession. The point of the reply is not at first sight very obvious, but it illustrates one phase of Kruger's attitude towards the Uitlanders. These men, who had been so easily enfranchised, had no real affection for the State. They acquiesced in the annexation, took no part in the insurrection, and refused to be members of the restored Republic. What is the use of giving the franchise to such men? Kruger's political conceptions in their narrow rigidity are not unlike the

* This last point was one on which Kruger always laid great stress: he had commandeered the Uitlanders, and they had refused to go to the front. How could they claim a citizenship for which military service was an essential condition? It was a false argument, for the exclusion from citizenship had preceded the attempt to commandeer. The liability to military service undoubtedly would have deterred many aliens from taking the franchise, but there never was any indication that the Uitlanders wished to enjoy the privileges of citizenship without bearing its burdens. So far from being an argument for restricting the franchise, the commando obligation was really an argument for enlarging it, as it was in itself a safeguard against an undue rush for the franchise on the part of undesirable citizens.

religious conceptions of the sect to which he belongs. Burgher-ship in his eyes is, like salvation, only for the elect, for those of the true Afrikander Republican faith. He has no use for luke-warm burghers to whom Imperialism or Republicanism are matters of comparative indifference. He can never get out of his mind the idea that the new burghers may vote, if not for annexation, at any rate for federation under British supremacy. From this digression Sir Alfred quietly endeavours to bring the President back to his main argument that the Uitlanders, who after all form the majority of the population, and to whom the Transvaal owes all its present wealth and influence, should, without swamping the old burghers, yet have immediately some reasonable share in the government, and should at least be able, during the discussion of laws affecting their interests, to express their views from the inside instead of from the outside. No reductions in the franchise that merely let in a few chosen individuals will suffice. To this the President replies that there are perhaps 30,000 burghers and 60,000 or 70,000 Uitlanders, and that if he were to give them the franchise he might as well give up the Republic. The form of the oath, however, the President declares is a point he might be willing to consider. Thus ends the first meeting.

Second day. Kruger complains of British military preparations. The Boers will never attack.

On the following morning (June 1) the President opens proceedings by demanding an explanation of rumours he has heard of landings of troops at the Cape and in Natal, and suspicious movements in Rhodesia and Zambaansland, and asks straight out whether any treachery is intended or whether the British Government means to threaten him! There is no reason to suppose for a moment that Kruger believes the rumours. The fact is that he was hard pressed yesterday by the High Commissioner without being able to produce even a colourable reply to his arguments, and is now resolved to transfer the war into the enemy's country and put Sir Alfred on the defensive by plying him with grievances. Sir Alfred categorically denies the truth of the rumours, and remarks that for his part he has paid no attention to the alarming reports which reach him daily of the movements of the Transvaal burghers. But he wishes to point out that the large armaments of the Transvaal

during the past few years have created a bad impression in Great Britain. The President answers that there are only just enough rifles to provide each farmer with a good gun. The Boers have never acted on the aggressive even against the weakest barbarians. This assertion the veteran hero of a score of raids on Kaffir tribes backs by an equally correct statement as to the future: "We follow out what God says—'Accursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark,' *and as long as Your Excellency lives you will see that we shall never be the attacking party on another man's land.*"

The counter-petition.

The first opening having failed Kruger now brings out the counter-petition and a bunch of affidavits to prove that the Uitlanders' petition was fraudulently concocted. To the latter point Sir Alfred is not in a position to reply.* With regard to the former he presses the President to state how many of the 22,500 alleged petitioners are British subjects and how many "Peruvians," but without success. In any case, declares Sir Alfred, the counter-petition makes no difference to his conviction that the Uitlanders—especially those who wish to reside permanently in the Transvaal—have very great grievances indeed, and he earnestly urges the President to see the necessity, wisdom and justice of dealing with them. Sir Alfred has made no definite proposition, but the President replies excitedly:—

The franchise 'worse than annexation.'

"If I had to consent to the proposition which His Excellency has put forward here, in the way that he brought it on here, then the freedom of the Republic would not exist any longer. *It would be worse than annexation.*"

Sir Alfred again protests strongly against this attempt to evade discussion by reiterating the parrot cry of "my independence," but to no effect.

The President retorts that the Uitlanders, if they got the franchise, could put an end to his independence and "send

* Subsequent investigation conclusively proved that the affidavits had been secured by Government officials—notably by Chief Detective de Villiers, who had played a leading part in the Amphitheatre riot and the bogus conspiracy—by bribery, or under threats of arrest, from sundry disreputable characters, who, in fact, themselves admitted on oath that they had signed the affidavits under pressure, or even in ignorance of their contents.

the old burghers away where they liked." The High Commissioner does not waste his breath in trying to argue with such an extravagant hyperbole, but restates the gist of the situation in a few words :—

"I do not see how the old burghers can have it both ways. They cannot have a very large population streaming in to develop the resources of the country, and giving it a much higher position in the world than it would otherwise have, and at the same time exclude these people from participation in the Government of the country."

Kruger's attempts to evade the issue.

But it is no easy task to keep the wily old President to the point. He knows the weakness of his case quite as well as Sir Alfred, and either shifts his ground or meets the High Commissioner's courteous insistence with a rumbling growl that he will never sell his independence. So now he turns off on to the excellence of the Transvaal Gold Law and the beauties of the Second Volksraad to which the Uitlander can so easily attain. Sir Alfred remarks that he could not recommend one Uitlander to abandon his citizenship for the slight privileges and yet slighter hopes of such a "Zwitterding"—to use an expressive German word—as the half-enfranchised burgher. He is not eager to argue at length over side issues, and thinks they are getting no further. So he once more points out to the President the actual position at the Conference :—

"To put it shortly, I have come here to see whether I can induce the President to accept suggestions of mine, made in a friendly spirit, suggestions which Her Majesty's Government could recommend to its own subjects to accept as a reasonable instalment of reform. I put them forward, and if the President does not see his way, if the President thinks we are asking too much, all I can say is I have made my suggestions and I must report to Her Majesty's Government that the President rejects our friendly suggestions."

Sir A. Milner proposes his scheme.

The President now asks Sir Alfred to propose a scheme, but not to touch his independence. "Don't let us talk about independence every minute," replies Sir Alfred, a trifle nettled.

"I assure the President I don't want to touch his independence." He then proceeds to unfold his scheme:—

"There are two things I have to consider. I have got to consider the prejudices of the old burghers. I know that even if I were to convince the President himself he might have difficulty in convincing other people; therefore I must in proposing anything propose something which it can be made absolutely clear to the old burghers will not swamp them. On the other hand, I have to consider that it is perfectly useless to propose something which will give no satisfaction whatever to the reasonable desires of the new population, which may be rejected at once as totally insufficient, the whole object of the proposal being to give them such an amount of satisfaction as will bring them on to the side of the State to throw in their lot with it, and to work in future with the old burghers as one people. Bearing these things in mind, what I suggest is this: that every foreigner who can prove satisfactorily that he has been resident in the country for five years, and that he desires to make it his permanent place of residence, that he is prepared to take the oath to obey the laws, to undertake all the obligations of citizenship, and to defend the independence of the country, should be allowed to become a citizen on taking that oath. This should be confined to persons possessing a certain amount of property, or a certain amount of yearly wages, and who have good characters. In order to make that proposal of any real use for the new citizens who mostly live in one district in the Republic, and a district which only returns one member in 28 to the First Raad, and one in 28 to the Second Raad, I propose that there should be a certain number of new constituencies created, the number of which is a detail upon the discussion of which I will not now enter. But what is vital from my point of view is that the number of these districts should not be so small as to leave the representatives of the new population in a contemptible minority."

Character of the proposal.

The essence of the proposal is best given in the words of his own despatch to Mr. Chamberlain:—

"What was vital in my scheme was the simplification of the oath and the immediate admission to full burghership on taking it. Knowing as I do the feeling of the Uitlander population, and especially of the best of them on these points, I felt and feel that

any scheme not containing these concessions would be absolutely useless. The most influential and respectable sections of the Uitlander community feel strongly the indignity and injustice of asking them to denationalise themselves for anything less than full burghership—which in the South African Republic carries with it, *ipso facto*, the right to vote for the First Volksraad and the President. They will not accept citizenship of the Republic on any other terms; and unless they accept it in adequate numbers, the whole policy of relying on their admission to the State as a means for the improvement of the Government and the removal of grievances falls to the ground."

The President replies that then the 60,000 would swamp the 30,000. Sir Alfred vainly points out that the 60,000 would only elect a small proportion of the Volksraad. The President obstinately persists that the majority of the burghers are the sovereign power, and argument is useless. So Sir Alfred takes up another thread and points out that the 60,000 are only a bugbear. A very large number of them have no desire to settle permanently; others will not have the property qualification; and as for those who shout for the franchise and don't want it, the best way to shut their mouths is to offer it them. And so terminates a hard morning's work for the High Commissioner, without much apparent result.

Kruger alarmed. Arranges for delay while getting ready a counter-proposal.

It has had some slight result though. It has seriously alarmed and disconcerted the President. Kruger has dealt with High Commissioners and Colonial Secretaries before, but none quite like this one. Kruger's overmastering will-power, his concentration on the object he wishes to attain, have hitherto almost invariably broken down resistance or repelled attack. This time he has met a will as strong as his own, combined with an intellect with which it is useless for him to try and grapple. His friends, too, see that the President is being driven into a corner, and that something must be done to get the argument off the general line on to some particular counter-proposal, which the High Commissioner, or perhaps the British Government behind him, may be persuaded to accept. To the devising of this Messrs. Smuts and Fischer set their brains; it must appear on the

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MARTHINUS THEUNIS STEYN.

PRESIDENT OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE, 1896-1900

surface as like Sir Alfred's as possible, but it must be capable of effectively excluding the Uitlander. Meanwhile the Conference must be carried on. Kruger has plenty to talk about if only Sir Alfred will let him, and out of a more random discussion, conducted in the President's own style, some bargain may spring up which after all may be worked for the benefit of the cause. "*Paris vaut bien une messe*," and free access to the sea might well compensate the admission into the fold of a few hundred carefully selected Uitlanders. So Sir Alfred is told by the "honest brokers" that he must give the President a little breathing space and talk of other things.

Discussion on other matters. Dynamite. The President's grievances.

Accordingly, when they meet again after lunch, Sir Alfred points out that while it is no use discussing now the many disputed questions which would be solved of themselves if the complainants were put into a position to fight their own battles, "there are other questions which do not fall to the ground on the granting of the franchise," and that he is ready to discuss these.* The first point Sir Alfred suggests is the question of the dynamite monopoly. The President enters into a rambling disquisition, the drift of which Sir Alfred vainly tries to discover. Every time Sir Alfred asks a question, Kruger replies, "I am coming to that," and doubles back on to another part of the subject. The only direct answer he makes is when Sir Alfred asks for a written explanation of a new scheme which the President is con-

* It is worth noting here that neither Sir A. Milner nor Mr. Chamberlain ever allowed themselves to say or write anything which could possibly lead the Boers to believe that they were ready to abandon every possible disputed question between the Imperial Government and the Transvaal in exchange for franchise reform. Yet in spite of this the Boers and their sympathisers constantly asserted that the failure of the subsequent negotiations was due to the steady increase of the British demands, and to Kruger's fear that concession would only pave the way to fresh demands. The truth is that Kruger never even conceded that reasonable measure of franchise reform by which alone an atmosphere could be created for the peaceful solution of other difficulties. For four months the British Government contented itself by only pressing one half of its claims, and when it announced its intention to state its demands in full it was promptly met by an imperious ultimatum and the invasion and annexation of its territory.

fusedly expounding. "That would be encroaching upon my independence," Kruger replies. Sir Alfred is getting alarmed; he sees a whole vista of inconclusive discussions ahead, and remarks that really if the main franchise question cannot be settled at the Conference, the other disputes had better continue in the usual course. He asks the President to give an answer to his suggested franchise scheme to-morrow, and bring forward the other points then if he wishes. The President thinks he will mention his grievances straight out, to give Sir Alfred a night to think over them. His demands are: (1) incorporation of Swaziland in the Transvaal; (2) settlement of the Raid indemnity; (3) a general treaty of arbitration; (4) the cession of Zambaansland. The last point, Sir Alfred remarks, is not open to discussion. There could be no question of ceding British territory.

Third day. Kruger attempts to bargain.

On Friday morning (June 2) the President begins by suggesting that if an agreement is arrived at on the franchise question, all other matters shall be settled by arbitration. The form in which he introduces his suggestion is characteristic. He says that he understood the High Commissioner to have made it. Sir Alfred takes no notice of this little artifice, but replies that the President is trying to make a bargain, and that he has not come to bargain anything, but to press for redress of the Uitlander grievances. Once more he carefully and patiently sets out the whole object of his proposal, and makes clear once more that only a substantial measure of enfranchisement will put an end to the agitation of the Uitlanders. Kruger replies doggedly: "If I do what you propose, they get self-control, and then I would practically be giving my land away." All the same, the President thinks it is time now to yield a little, and he expresses his readiness to come to terms if possible, and induce the Volksraad to give its consent to the concessions agreed upon. Sir Alfred's proposal is out of the question, and a bargain he must have. How can he face his Volksraad and his burghers and tell them that he has brought back nothing to make it worth their while to make concessions on the franchise? Sir Alfred expresses his satisfaction at the President's expression of willingness to arrive at

a solution, and tries to bring Kruger once more to the subject of his proposal. Kruger, whose counter-proposal is not quite ready yet, refuses, and asks for an answer on the points raised by him. Sir Alfred agrees. As to Swaziland, the Imperial Government really cannot concede. Only last year it conceded a great deal at the end of a long and difficult negotiation, and only a few weeks ago Sir Alfred has had to protest against an unwarranted interference in the rights of a British concession for explosives in the country. Doing away with the autonomy of Swaziland would be a hardship to British subjects and others, who would have to go to Pretoria for everything. Swaziland is the very last question the President should have brought up at this moment, thinks Sir Alfred. As to the Raid indemnity, a despatch is on its way containing a proposal from the Chartered Company that the claim be submitted to arbitration. Lastly, as to arbitration, Sir Alfred hopes that if the main cause of friction is removed, it will be possible in the friendly atmosphere thus created to establish some automatic method for settling minor disputes. There are other questions, however, that do not admit of arbitration—questions of fairness, justice of particular laws, soundness of a particular administration. Nor can there be any foreign intervention in the matter—that is a principle from which the British Government will not depart. In any case this is only his personal view. He has had no opportunity to consult Her Majesty's Government, and can give no pledge beyond promising to do what he personally can to assist in a satisfactory solution. Kruger sees that his opponent will not bargain, and complains:—

Sir A. Milner replies to Kruger's grievances. Swaziland. The Raid indemnity. Arbitration.

"His Excellency has not got any nearer in the matter of Swaziland, or in the matter of the Indemnity, and on the point of Arbitration. But if he will not come nearer to me on these three points, *I should get nothing* by coming to an agreement on the point of the Franchise. I think all the points should be taken simultaneously."

Sir Alfred feels it necessary to remind Kruger once again that the Conference was not called together that Kruger

Sir A. Milner refuses to buy a settlement.

might "get something," but that he should give speedily, and with both hands, lest worse misfortune should overtake him.

"However much I may desire to come to a settlement about this question of the position of the Uitlander population, *I will not buy such a settlement.* I am convinced that it is very much in the President's interest, more in his interest to get it settled. I consider the present position to be an absolute danger for the South African Republic."

Sir Alfred believes in some system of settling future differences, but that is a question to be discussed on its own merits. He will have no "Kaffir bargain." And he must insist on having some discussion on his proposal. Why did the President press him to make it at all, if he refuses to discuss it? The President complains that he is "beaten out of the field" altogether. He has been given nothing on any of his points. Even on arbitration Sir Alfred has said nothing he can lay hold of. "I think it would be as well to adjourn," says Sir Alfred, but insists that he must have some sort of reply by the afternoon:—

"I have come down here at a time of crisis in order to see if one big straightforward effort might not be made to avert a great disaster, such as an open breach between the two Governments, and I claim that a proposal I have made to that effect should be discussed on its merits. If agreement is not possible on that point, then everything else is waste of time; if it is possible, then I will do everything in my power to remove other difficulties out of the way, and I will be engaged in that work while the President is engaged in obtaining the approval of his burghers to the plan on which we both agree—if we agree. We cannot go on for ever and meet again and again, and never bring things to a point. When we come back I must ask the President whether he is willing to go into the question which I have propounded."

"Possibly yes, and possibly no," says the President, "but I will tell you this afternoon. If you won't do any bargaining it will not be my fault if we don't come to terms."

At two o'clock they meet again. Sir Alfred expects to have a hard fight to get some sort of an expression of opinion out of the President. He knows nothing of the assiduous

labours of Kruger's legal advisers, and is completely taken by surprise when the President calmly remarks, "I have drawn up a memorandum on the franchise," with the air of one who has spent the luncheon interval in jotting down notes, and hands him a Reform Bill elaborately drawn out in clauses and sub-clauses. It is the old law, modified in several features, but in principle unaltered. The principle of half-burghership is retained, though the period of it is considerably reduced. The objectionable oath is altered. Some consideration is shown for past residence. But the whole law is hedged round with restrictions. The half-burghership is to be granted under the following conditions:—

Sudden production of Kruger's counter-proposal. Its ludicrous inadequacy.

"1. Six months' notice of intention to apply for naturalisation; 2. Two years' continued registration; 3. Residence in the South African Republic during that period; 4. No dishonouring sentence; 5. Proof of obedience to the laws; no act against Government or independence; 6. Proof of full State citizenship and franchise or title thereto in former country; 7. Possession of unmortgaged fixed property to the value of £150 approximately, or occupation of house to the rental of £50 per annum, or yearly income of at least £200. Nothing, however, shall prevent the Government from granting naturalisation to persons who have not satisfied this condition; 8. Taking of an oath similar to that of the Orange Free State."

And the full franchise by

"1. Continuous registration five years after naturalisation; 2. Continuous residence during that period; 3. No dishonouring sentence; 4. Proof of obedience to the laws, &c.; 5. Proof that applicant still complies with the condition A (7)."

Furthermore, those who were in the country before the passing of the franchise law of 1890 are to get the full franchise within two years of naturalisation, if they naturalise within six months of the Act taking effect. Those who have been in the country for two years or more can at once give notice of their intention to naturalise in six months' time. The first of these two concessions contains so obvious a pitfall that it may perhaps have been due to inadvertence. As naturalisation requires six months' notice, it is only those

who give notice before the Act takes effect who will be able to avail themselves of it. The whole proposal, moreover, is conditional upon an agreement to submit future difference to arbitration and upon the High Commissioner's submitting to Her Majesty's Government the President's request for the incorporation of Swaziland. Kruger is determined at all costs to give nothing without receiving something in exchange.

Sir A. Milner suggests scheme of local autonomy.

Sir Alfred promises to consider the proposal, but points out how completely it differs from his, and doubts if he could possibly recommend it to the Uitlanders. As there seems so little prospect of agreement on the franchise he suggests the alternative proposal of local autonomy for the Rand. Kruger will not hear of this for a moment. That would be simply giving his land away. The High Commissioner might as well ask him to give up the title-deeds of his farm to any strangers who had happened to work on it. And so ends the third day.

Fourth day. New electoral districts. Sir A. Milner's memorandum.

On Saturday the President opens proceedings by explaining that the omission of any reference to the creation of new electoral divisions was due to an oversight, and that he intends to create four * divisions instead of two in the gold-fields district. Sir Alfred puts in a memorandum admitting that the President's proposal contains some improvements, but pointing out its utter inadequacy to suit the needs of the case. The discussion then continues. The President remarks that it is against God's word to let strangers carry on the administration, and Sir Alfred once again patiently explains that the whole essence of his suggestion lies in making these men, not strangers, but burghers. The President pathetically asks Sir Alfred to remember how few the burghers are. They have paid for their country with their blood, and now they are to be outvoted. As for the Uitlanders there is no limit to their covetousness. "They are like naughty children; if you give them a finger they will want the whole hand."

On the following day the President sends in a reply to Sir Alfred's memorandum, concocted for him by his advisers.

* In the explanatory memorandum put in afterwards the number mentioned is five.

The reply is a piece of the shallowest quibbling. It argues that full citizenship is conferred at once on naturalisation, but that the five years after that is only a somewhat long period of registration; naturalised aliens have no vote in the elections of the British House of Lords; the President's proposal does give immediate enfranchisement—of those who have already been naturalised for five years—and will tend to promote a fusion of races which Sir Alfred's scheme would never do. As regards the proposal for a local autonomy, the goldfields already enjoy a "wide measure" of local government, and some day perhaps the Volksraad may even extend it. In conclusion, the reply reminds Sir Alfred that the President's offer is purely conditional on a proper adjustment of the matters set forth in the former memorandum.

Kruger's quibbling reply to the memorandum.

At Monday's meeting the President's reply is read out and is followed by a long memorandum, in which Sir Alfred, after criticising the President's proposal in detail, asserts clearly that it is not a proposal which can satisfy the Uitlanders or relieve the Imperial Government from its duty of acting upon the petition. As for bargaining, he will have none of it. His own proposal was put forward in no bargaining spirit, but was suggested as the smallest measure of reform that could be of any use. It does involve a considerable change of policy for the President, but in so grave a situation as the present small changes are of no use. The President has not yet realised that the proposal is in itself a compromise. The Transvaal has much to atone for in its past treatment of the Uitlanders, and it has everything to gain in silencing their complaints. As the Conference has led to nothing, he can only advise Her Majesty's Government to take action upon the petition.

Fifth day. Sir A. Milner's second memorandum.

The President waits to the end of the memorandum, and then remarks: "I am not ready to hand over my country to strangers. I understand from His Excellency's arguments that if I do not give the whole management of my land and government to the strangers, there is nothing to be done." In the afternoon he hands in a memorandum expressing regret at the High Commissioner's attitude, disclaiming all idea of surrounding his proposal by pitfalls, or of desiring

The Conference ends.

to drive a bargain, and suggesting that he will lay his proposal before the Volksraad, in the expectation that the High Commissioner will recommend to Her Majesty's Government his request for arbitration. Sir Alfred remarks that he does not in any way wish to discourage the President, but his proposals to the Volksraad would be entirely his own affair, and no part of an understanding with Her Majesty's Government. In the same way, if he desires to make a proposal about arbitration, it will be considered on its merits. "The Conference is absolutely at an end, and there is no obligation on either side arising out of it." A few mutual courtesies, and the Conference closes.

Results of the Conference. Effects of Sir A. Milner's firm attitude.

Thus ended the famous Conference at Bloemfontein, having apparently succeeded only in showing the hopeless divergence of views between the President and the High Commissioner. But though it failed to bring about an agreement it was not without results of the greatest importance. The unyielding determination with which Sir Alfred Milner kept the discussion to the one main point, and the patience with which he again and again set forth the nature of the compromise he desired the President to adopt, were not without their effect both on Kruger himself and on his friends and advisers. It is true that Kruger declared that his Bloemfontein proposals were the utmost limit to which "his burghers" would go, that the Free State pronounced them to be eminently reasonable and acceptable, and that the Colonial Afrikanders professed to share that opinion.* Nevertheless, a considerable

* On June 10 Mr. Schreiner wrote to President Steyn thanking him for his efforts in the cause of peace, criticising adversely the policy of Mr. Chamberlain and Sir A. Milner, but declaring that a strenuous and untimely protest against interference on his part would only hasten events and render more remote the chances of a calmer consideration of Kruger's very practical proposals. "The path of duty is sometimes not clear when facts are not certain; but I know that to-day is not the time when in this colony we should by what would be mere strong words and wishes prejudice the position which after all we still hold in trust for the people of this colony, and in some sense for the whole of South Africa. . . . We must still all of us hope that the great evil—War—may not come upon the land. To you I would say one word only, as to your position in the event of a struggle, and that may be most unnecessary—remember the great strength that you would have while you can remain outside."

advance in the direction of a compromise was made afterwards, and that advance was undoubtedly the result of the firm and clear attitude taken up by the High Commissioner. Any other attitude would have led to no solution, but would have left the British Government at the beginning of June face to face with the alternative of abandoning the Uitlanders' claims altogether, or of insisting on specific redress with the certainty of war. That Sir Alfred's proposal was discussed for four months, and that at one moment it seemed within measurable distance of being accepted, was due to the steadfastness with which he refused to discuss anything outside of that proposal at Bloemfontein. Hardly less important was the influence of Sir Alfred's attitude in unifying and steadying British opinion in South Africa. The compromise he advocated gave less to the Uitlanders than many even of the more moderate men among them demanded, while at the same time its success depended entirely on the willingness of the Uitlanders as a body to accept it. Sir Alfred's firmness, the earnestness with which he made it clear that he would accept no proposal which he did not himself believe could be recommended to British subjects in the Transvaal, convinced the Uitlanders that their interests were safe in his charge, and that they could safely accept any proposal he recommended.

Great meeting of the Uitlanders June 10. Mr. Wessels' letter.

At the great and enthusiastic meeting of the unenfranchised, held at Johannesburg on June 10, unanimous resolutions were carried expressing gratitude to Sir A. Milner and condemning the President's proposals.* In reply to a question by the Chairman, the assembly unanimously declared its willingness not only to accept but to avail themselves of a liberal franchise. One of the features of the evening was a letter in support of the meeting sent by

* This last resolution was seconded by Mr. L. I. Seymour, the distinguished American engineer. Like most of his fellow-citizens in South Africa, Mr. Seymour was profoundly convinced of the justice of the British cause. Nor did he shrink from translating his conviction into action. He was the chief organiser of that invaluable force the Railway Pioneer Regiment. On June 16, 1900—just a year after his speech at Johannesburg—he fell while gallantly repelling an attack of the Boers upon the small garrison at Zand River.

Mr. J. W. Wessels, the leading advocate of the Transvaal Bar, who had, as an unenfranchised Afrikander, been one of the chief speakers on the National Union platform before the Raid. A few sentences will suffice to show how an Afrikander who was not carried away by racial prejudice regarded President Kruger's illusory proposals:—

"If I thought that the proposal of President Kruger was likely to relieve the strain for a considerable number of years, I could advise its acceptance; but I feel confident that his proposal will in no way allay the unrest and dissatisfaction. Anyone who knows the feelings of the Uitlander population in Johannesburg must know that half measures will do no good. It is with them now a matter of sentiment and a feeling of degradation. Unless their sentiment can be satisfied, and unless this feeling of inferiority can be done away with, the Uitlander question will be a festering sore in the vitals of South Africa. Some say the sentiment is folly and the feeling of inferiority unreasonable. It may be so, but I am convinced that these feelings are firm-rooted and cannot be eradicated until a fair, just, and full franchise is given to the Uitlanders. I am Afrikander-born and yield to no man in love for my country, and I will state my views openly, though I know I am detested by a large body of my countrymen for entertaining these views. Hated or not hated, I feel that these views are right and will some day prevail. They who prevent the Uitlander from getting a full and fair franchise seem to me narrow-minded and bad statesmen, the evil genii of this Republic, the cause of intense racial feeling, and the authors of future evils too awful to contemplate. I do not anticipate that British subjects will flock to the registration offices if a five years' full franchise were offered them; but I do know that their sentiment will be appeased, their ideas of justice will be satisfied, and their feeling of antipathy to the governing class in this country will be allayed. No man likes to belong to an inferior caste, and Englishmen least of all. No man likes to have his inferiority flouted in his face at every turn, and unfortunately the legislation of recent years has done that to the Uitlanders but too frequently."

The Cape Town deputation.

Not only at Johannesburg, but in every centre of South Africa, enthusiastic public meetings were held expressing the

gratitude of British subjects to the High Commissioner, and declaring their unquestioning confidence in his policy. At Cape Town a deputation of the leading citizens waited upon Sir Alfred on June 12 to assure him of their admiration and their support. Sir Alfred replied in a firm and temperate speech, setting forth the policy he was determined to pursue, and declaring that neither the position of Great Britain in South Africa, nor the dignity of the white race, could tolerate that a large, wealthy, industrious and intelligent community of white men should continue in the state of subjection which was the lot of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal. In England, too, and in the great self-governing colonies, the deliberations of the Conference, when published, had a great effect in concentrating public opinion on the real question at issue, and in making clear the absolute justice and moderation of the High Commissioner's demands on the one hand, and on the other the perverse obstinacy of President Kruger in refusing to admit the seriousness of the situation, and in trying to drive bargains with concessions whose unreality could deceive no one.

CHAPTER XI

AFRIKANDER MEDIATION

The British Government resolves to act through Kruger's Afrikander sympathizers.

THE failure of the Bloemfontein Conference left the British Government with the alternative either of taking immediate action upon the Uitlander petition, and pressing for a series of definite and specific reforms, or of waiting in the hope that the friendly suggestions for a compromise made by Sir Alfred Milner had not fallen altogether unheeded, and that the Transvaal might yet of its own accord put an end to a situation that had become intolerable. To pursue the former course meant the certainty of war. And war was the very last thing that the Government as a whole, or Mr. Chamberlain individually, wished to bring about, if there were any possibility of avoiding it without abandoning the responsibility assumed in accepting the petition. On the other hand, there were indications, however faint and uncertain, that President Kruger might yet be brought to reason by his friends. It is true that the Free State Government and Volksraad and the leading Cape Afrikanders had publicly declared themselves satisfied with Kruger's "reasonable and practical" proposals. But Sir A. Milner had some grounds for believing that the clearness and moderation with which he had stated the case for reform, and the frank earnestness with which he had insisted upon the determination of the British Government to secure that reform at all hazards, had not been without their effect either at Bloemfontein or at Cape Town. Accordingly Sir Alfred and the Government behind him determined to suspend for the present all action upon the petition, and to avoid doing anything that might precipitate an immediate crisis, and in the meanwhile to urge upon Kruger's Afrikander sympathizers the absolute necessity of inducing him to listen to

reason. At the same time, in order to make it quite clear that the Imperial Government was in earnest, Mr. Chamberlain on June 13 ordered his despatch of May 10, dealing with the Uitlander petition, to be handed in to the Transvaal authorities. A Bluebook (C. 9345) was simultaneously published dealing fully with all the grievances suffered by British subjects during the last three years, in order to concentrate public attention in England on the questions at issue.

Kruger's first proposal. The debate in the Raad.

The Bloemfontein Conference ended on June 5. On the 7th President Kruger met his Volksraad and informed them of the result of his mission. On the 9th, after two days' secret discussion, both Raads in joint session passed by acclamation a resolution regretting Sir A. Milner's refusal to agree with the extremely just proposal of the President, and confirming the President's policy. On the 12th the President's detailed proposals for a new franchise law were laid before the First Raad.* They were the same proposals as those made at Bloemfontein, except for a reduction of the income qualification from £200 to £100, the substitution of a less objectionable form of oath, and the introduction of a clause by which the children of naturalised Uitlanders might obtain the status of their fathers upon arriving at the age of sixteen. It was also announced a few days later that the President, by virtue of the powers vested in him, would increase the representation of the goldfields by three members. The franchise scheme was a wholly illusory one. It maintained the almost insuperable barrier of a prolonged period of half-citizenship. It provided no immediate enfranchisement for any section of the Uitlanders. It bristled with obstacles and pitfalls to such an extent that it seemed contrived with the express purpose of excluding rather than of including the new population. As the President somewhat naively admitted to the Raad a few days later, he was willing to assist those who had signed the counter-petition, but those foreigners who made a noise about anything should get nothing. On the 14th he addressed the Volksraad in a violent harangue, declaring that they had given away half

* C. 9415, pp. 50–57.

their rights, while their "enemies" had not given anything; to concede any more would be to give away their independence; the new law would admit many thieves and murderers; even so their "enemies" might not be satisfied and would make war. He did not want war, but he would not give away his rights; the Lord had protected their independence in the past, He would never let them lose it. On the 15th Kruger again addressed the Raad in a somewhat more moderate tone, and even declared that he had no intention of excluding the Reform prisoners from the franchise.

The Raad adjourned. The Paardekraal meeting.

At this stage of the debate the Volksraad resolved at the President's request to accept the draft law provisionally, and to adjourn till July 3, in order to consult the opinions of the burghers. Of that opinion the two meetings which took place in the next two days gave a clear indication. On the 16th a large meeting of burghers and sympathizers with the Government was held at Johannesburg, and resolutions were unanimously passed approving of the President's attitude. On the 17th a great meeting of about 4,000 burghers, which, somewhat against Kruger's wish, had been called together by some of the commandants, was held at Paardekraal. The speeches were distinctly warlike in tone. General Cronje called upon the assembly "never to surrender to any Power the privilege they had inherited, and if they were required to shed their blood, to put their trust in the Almighty." Mr. Kock, of the Executive Council, declared that in opposing Great Britain the Transvaal would have all Afrikanderdom at its back. The Free State and Cape Colony would stand by the Transvaal even to the death. Even General Joubert, who had openly declared a few weeks before that the franchise after three or four years was a thing every new-comer ought to claim as a right, was anything but conciliatory in tone, and full of allusion to the possibility of war. In face of the uncompromising attitude assumed alike by reactionaries and Progressives among the Boers, it is curious to note that on the same day the leader of the Liberal party in England declared that the Transvaal had made considerable concessions since the Bloemfontein Conference, and that there was nothing to justify even military preparations.

How little the Uitlanders themselves thought of the "considerable concessions" appears from the letter sent to Sir Alfred Milner on June 16 by the South African League,* urging that the compromise suggested by him, though eminently desirable, would, in order to be really satisfactory, require to be supplemented by provisions securing the independence of the judiciary, the permanence of the Constitution, the permissive use of the English language in the Volksraad and the Law Courts; by reforms of the Civil Service, the police system, the municipalities, and the juries; by the abolition of the Public Meetings Law, the Aliens Expulsion Law, and the Press Law; by the demolition of the forts threatening Johannesburg; and by a large measure of redistribution. Most of these were matters which, according to Sir Alfred's view, ought to be fought for by the Uitlanders themselves through the franchise, and which should be pressed by the Imperial Government only if the franchise solution failed. But the earnestness with which the Uitlanders continued to press these points throughout the summer showed the danger that lay in accepting anything less than the free and unrestricted five years' franchise as the basis of a solution whose whole hope of success lay in its being acceptable to the bulk of the Uitlander community.

The South African League and Kruger's proposal.

On June 11 Mr. Schreiner had requested Sir Alfred to inform Mr. Chamberlain that he and his colleagues were agreed in thinking President Kruger's Bloemfontein proposal "practical, reasonable, and a considerable step in the right direction." On the 15th he added to this communication the further opinion of himself and his colleagues that a state of things had not arisen which would justify active interference in the internal affairs of the Transvaal.† It was not difficult for Sir Alfred to see that these statements were made mainly with the object of influencing opinion in England—as was shown a little later by the extreme anxiety of the Cape Ministry that the fact of their having made representations should be acknowledged in Parliament by Mr. Chamberlain—and that the Cape Afrikanders knew

Mr. Schreiner and Sir A. Milner.

* C. 9415, p. 32. † C. 9415, pp. 7, 10.

quite well the utter inadequacy of the concessions made. The message of the 15th did, in fact, acknowledge that Kruger's scheme might be improved by the immediate enfranchisement of those who had been in the Transvaal before 1890, and by making it optional to obtain the full franchise without previous naturalisation at the end of seven years. Sir Alfred remarked to Mr. Schreiner that, as the latter seemed to agree more with himself than with President Kruger, it was to President Kruger that he had better tender his advice. Mr. Chamberlain's reply was in the same strain. He trusted that the Cape Ministry would use all their influence to induce the Transvaal to take such action as would relieve the Imperial Government from the necessity of considering the question of intervention.

Sir A. Milner induces the Afrikanders to intervene.

During the next fortnight Sir Alfred exerted his utmost influence with the Cape Ministry and with Mr. Fischer, who had come down from Bloemfontein to consult with them, to impress upon them the necessity of really energetic intervention on their part if they wished to preserve peace. He also strongly urged upon them that if they could induce the President to make substantial concessions, they should at the same time persuade him not to commit himself hastily to any new scheme before consulting with the British Government. Any scheme to be successful would have to be acceptable to the Uitlanders. The Uitlanders had already expressed their approval of the unrestricted five years' franchise, but any alternative proposal would have to be submitted to competent Uitlander representatives before the Imperial Government could decide as to its adequacy. The attitude taken up by Mr. Fischer and the Cape Ministry on these various points seemed promising, and a more or less definite agreement was come to, according to which Mr. Fischer should play the leading part as intermediary between Cape Town and Pretoria. To facilitate the carrying on of negotiations in secret, both Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Fischer were provided by the High Commissioner with British Government cipher codes. The assertion has often been made that Sir A. Milner showed a contemptuous and unconstitutional disregard for the opinions of the Cape Ministry. The fact,

on the contrary, is that all through the negotiations Sir Alfred kept in closest touch with Mr. Schreiner, and used his utmost endeavours to make use of the influence of the Afrikander party to preserve peace. It can be no charge against him that, as High Commissioner, he did not let his policy be swayed by the naturally one-sided views of a narrow majority in one South African colony, to the detriment of his wider responsibilities to the Imperial Government and to South Africa as a whole.

Mr. Fischer at Pretoria. June 25–28.

On June 25 Mr. Fischer visited Pretoria and spent several days in negotiation with the leading members of the Government. On the 27th Sir Alfred telegraphed to him through Mr. Greene to remind him that any new proposal of President Kruger's should be first submitted privately to the Imperial Government. Mr. Fischer, however, preferred to negotiate purely confidentially with the Transvaal Executive. As to the result of his negotiations he imparted nothing to Mr. Greene beyond the not very hopeful statement that there was no question of the Transvaal agreeing to the Bloemfontein compromise, and that the Transvaal did not recognise the right of the Imperial Government to be consulted on the franchise, which was an internal matter. He promised, however, for his own part, privately to inform Mr. Greene of the nature of the new proposals before the vote was actually taken in the Volksraad.* On the evening of the 28th Mr. Fischer returned to Bloemfontein.

Mr. Hofmeyr's proposed visit. Mr. Chamberlain's speech of June 26.

One of the objects of his journey had been to pave the way for Mr. Hofmeyr. The leader of constitutional Afrikanderdom and the leader of militant Afrikanderdom were by no means on the best of terms. President Kruger had never forgiven Mr. Hofmeyr his conduct over the Swaziland Convention, and in his crude view of politics regarded an Afrikander who could co-operate with the Imperial Government as little short of a traitor. Mr. Hofmeyr, on his side, could feel but little sympathy for the man who, by his reactionary prejudices and insensate thirst for power, had brought the whole Afrikander cause to the verge of ruin. To go to Pretoria in the hope of persuading

* C. 9415, p. 13.

the stubborn old President to listen to reason, with the certainty almost of meeting with a rebuff, was in itself no small act of self-sacrifice on Mr. Hofmeyr's part. Nothing but the realisation of the imminent danger that Kruger was incurring by his reckless and defiant attitude would have induced him to take this step. That realisation was intensified after Mr. Fischer had left Cape Town by the telegraphic summaries of the speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham on the 26th, in which, after reviewing the whole policy of the Transvaal Government and pointing out that Great Britain had, since 1881, been four times on the verge of war with the Republic, Mr. Chamberlain declared that President Kruger's proposals were utterly unacceptable, as not constituting even a fair instalment of reform, that no amendment of them could be acceptable which did not give the Uitlanders some appreciable representation at once, and that the Government were unanimous in their support of Sir Alfred Milner's policy and in their determination not to look back once they had put their hands to the plough. Accordingly, although Mr. Fischer could hold out but slight hopes of success, Mr. Hofmeyr decided to leave Cape Town on July 1 accompanied by Mr. Herholdt, the Minister of Agriculture, and at any rate proceed as far as Bloemfontein. Before they left, Mr. Chamberlain telegraphed to the High Commissioner on June 30:—

"As it is not desirable to avoid having to refuse what may be claimed as a concession, and yet be an altogether unsatisfactory one, you should let it be clearly understood by Hofmeyr, or any one else negotiating with Transvaal, that no franchise reform will be accepted which does not give the Uitlanders some genuine representation in First Volksraad at once. Reforms postponed are of no value."

Kruger's reluctance to see Mr. Hofmeyr. He gives way to Mr. Fischer's insistence.

President Kruger by no means relished the prospect of Mr. Hofmeyr's coming. He was determined not to give way if possible, and had calculated that by working up his burghers to a sufficiently defiant temper he might succeed in bluffing the British Government into retreating from their determined attitude. He did not now want any emissaries

from the adversary's camp running about Pretoria to urge the need of further concession and thus introducing division among his people and spoiling his policy. At the same time he had to consider Free State sentiment. President Steyn and Mr. Fischer were both still inclined to suggest concessions and eager to make sure of the moral support of the Cape Ministry, and he had to humour these prejudices in order to make sure of Free State assistance when the stress came. Accordingly Mr. Smuts and Mr. Grobler, the Under State Secretary, were sent down to Bloemfontein to reconnoitre, and spent the whole of July 2 in close consultation with Mr. Fischer and the Cape envoys—the envoys demanding some sort of assurance that their journey should not be altogether purposeless, and the reconnoitring party trying to discover what was the least concession the envoys would consider adequate. Messrs. Smuts and Grobler returned that night with their report. On the 3rd Kruger telegraphed to Steyn that he feared the coming of the envoys would "make the position difficult"; but that if the Free State did not share his fears he would be glad to meet them. Mr. Fischer, who had again turned up in Pretoria on the 3rd, insisted that it would never do to send the envoys back unheard, and carried his point. On the 4th he telegraphed to his President: "South African Republic glad to meet Hofmeyr and Herholdt, but cannot say what chance of their mission succeeding till Volksraad consulted." Later on in the day he telegraphed that Kruger would see the Cape envoys before bringing the franchise question before the Volksraad. He added that he had been busy all day with the Executive, and thought he would get their assent to an eight years' franchise, leaving the period of half-citizenship optional; possibly even to a seven years' franchise. On the 5th he telegraphed again that he was trying for a seven years' optional franchise with immediate enfranchisement for those who had been nine years in the country. Messrs. Hofmeyr and Herholdt had meanwhile reached Pretoria, and now telegraphed to President Steyn to remind him of his promise to throw all his influence in the scale to help them.

Help certainly was needed. The Volksraad had met on

Arrogance of the Raad. Mr. Hofmeyr speaks seriously. His effort for peace. Limitation of Presidential election.

the 3rd, and had promptly displayed the incurable arrogance and levity which animated its proceedings by passing a resolution giving four new seats to the mining districts and fifteen new seats to exclusively burgher districts. This sort of joking was dangerous, and Mr. Hofmeyr made no attempt at the meetings of the Executive Council to conceal his indignation at the reckless and defiant policy of the Government. If any one worked hard for peace, it was Mr. Hofmeyr during the three days of his stay at Pretoria. With the practised judgment of one who had spent his life in working the machinery of politics, he knew that the Boers risked nothing by admitting even the whole Uitlander body to the franchise as long as they were only represented by eight or ten members in the Volksraad. There was no question of an "ugly rush." The only danger lay in the possibility of the election of an Uitlander president or commandant-general. Mr. Hofmeyr judged shrewdly enough that if the right to a reasonable and unequivocal franchise were promptly conceded, British public opinion would acquiesce in any alteration of those elections which would for a long time ahead safeguard the vested interest of the Boer minority in the supreme executive and military power. But Kruger would hear of no scheme transferring the Presidential election to the Volksraad, or to a body of electors. With his burghers he knew where he was, and he knew how to manage the elections, but he dreaded the results of a strange experiment. He had no mind to risk losing the Presidency in his old age merely in order to conciliate an enemy who, after all, would have to be fought some day. And though the subject was mentioned by the Government, no attempt was made to introduce the changes urged by Mr. Hofmeyr.

The new scheme of July 7. Its unsatisfactory character.

Unfortunately, too, Mr. Hofmeyr had no real support from Mr. Fischer. The latter spent far more of his time in consulting with his Transvaal friends how to satisfy the Cape Afrikanders with the least possible measure of reform, than in insisting upon the necessity for thoroughgoing changes. That least possible measure was communicated to the Volksraad on the 7th in the form of a Government missive proposing amendments in the draft

Mr. F. W. Reitz,

President of the Orange Free State, 1889--1896.
Transvaal State Secretary, 1898--1900.

Mr. Abraham Fischer,

Of the Executive Council of the Orange Free State.

Photo by "The Fane Studio," Bloemfontein.

franchise law. These amounted to (*a*) an optional seven years' franchise, the seven years being reckoned, not from the date of arrival in the country, but from the date of giving notice to the field-cornet of intention to be naturalised; (*b*) a complicated scheme by which those who were already in the country could get the full franchise after nine years' residence or five years after the passing of the law, providing always that they had been at least seven years in the country.* The privileges of this article only applied to those who registered themselves for enfranchisement within six months of the coming into operation of the law. There were some minor amendments and alterations of no great consequence. Four new seats were to be allotted to the gold-fields. But the scheme was full of obstacles and pitfalls and as a whole hopelessly inadequate.† So obscure were most of its provisions that when the law with its further amendments was finally passed they had to be elucidated by a special explanatory memorandum by Mr. Smuts, which, however, as the Uitlanders were not slow in pointing out, had no legal effect in getting rid of the obstacles lurking in the text of the law. If the Uitlanders had accepted it, and acted upon it, they might have secured two or three seats in the Raad, but there was no question of such an acceptance. On July 1 the Uitlander Council had published a declaration reasserting the demands made by the South African League in its letter of June 16, and asking that in view of the untrustworthiness of the Transvaal Government the reforms specified should form part of any general understanding between it and the Imperial Government.‡ On the 9th they passed resolutions declaring the Transvaal proposals entirely inadequate and unacceptable.

Mr. Hofmeyr regrets his failure.

Seeing that there was nothing more to be hoped for, the Cape envoys left Pretoria on the 7th. The report rapidly spread about that they had been extraordinarily successful, a

* The object of this provision seems to have been to postpone the enfranchisement of those who entered the Transvaal in 1895, 1896, and 1897, till the year 1904, *i.e.*, till after the next Presidential election.

† C. 9518, p. 27 and *passim*.

‡ C. 9518, p. 19.

report which Mr. Fischer was not slow in propagating. He immediately telegraphed to President Steyn :—

"Secret session both Raads have accepted my and Cape friends' proposals with only one dissentient vote."

That complete identification of the "Cape friends" with himself is not borne out by the following telegram sent to him by Mr. Hofmeyr on his way down :—

"Deplore failure. Thought had reason to expect success. Advise instant cancellation dynamite, followed by other reforms, and conciliatory tone in despatches."

Mr. Schreiner rushes into print.

The details of the new proposal reached Mr. Schreiner on the 7th, and he at once communicated them to the High Commissioner. Apparently without waiting to hear the full report of his colleagues, he announced the next morning, through the medium of the *South African News*, that the Government regarded the Transvaal proposals as adequate, satisfactory, and such as should secure a peaceful settlement. Another *communiqué* to the same journal, referring to an acknowledgment made by Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons of the receipt of representations from the Cape Government, added that the Government was convinced that no ground whatever existed for active interference in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. Mr. Schreiner's precipitancy was most unfortunate. It put both himself and the envoys in an awkward position with regard to Sir Alfred, who could not but feel that he had been trifled with, and suspect that Mr. Hofmeyr had played the same game with him that Mr. Fischer had played with the Cape Afrikanders, while at the same time it ruined all hope of extracting any concessions from Kruger in the future. Mr. Schreiner made no public recantation, but his disappointment is well shown in the contrast between two telegrams sent to President Steyn, the one on the 8th and the other on the 11th, the day after Mr. Hofmeyr's return. The first expresses the deep gratitude of himself and of South Africa for Mr. Steyn's work in the cause of peace. In the second Mr. Schreiner declares that he has urged the Transvaal to approach the Imperial

Government in a friendly manner, and can do no more. He entreats Mr. Steyn to secure delay in the passage of the Draft Law in order to afford occasion for fair criticism, and himself points out some of the obstacles the law presents to intending citizens.

Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Chamberlain both request Transvaal to delay. Kruger's mischievous policy.

The necessity of delay in order to consult with the Imperial Government was a matter Sir A. Milner had insisted upon in conversation with Mr. Schreiner the day before. Sir Alfred now gave Mr. Schreiner a communication for Mr. Fischer urging the necessity of not rushing the Bill through, but of dealing with it so as to create an atmosphere for friendly discussion. On the same day (July 11) Mr. Chamberlain sent a telegram requesting the Transvaal, if it wished its proposals to form any element in a settlement with Her Majesty's Government, to furnish details of the scheme officially, and expressing the hope that the Transvaal would not proceed with the measure until Her Majesty's Government had had an opportunity of communicating their views. The object alike of Sir Alfred and of Mr. Chamberlain was to secure the resumption of negotiations on a friendly footing, and to avoid the unpleasant necessity of having publicly to reject inadequate proposals which the other side represented as great concessions. Mr. Schreiner, whom Sir Alfred had at once informed of Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, regarded it in the same light, and telegraphed to Mr. Fischer to point out that the situation thus created should be improved and taken advantage of. But the resumption of negotiations was just what Kruger wished to avoid. He knew that he was no match in controversy for the High Commissioner, but he did believe that he knew the British people, and he considered that if he and his burghers maintained a sufficiently defiant front he could bluff Mr. Chamberlain into "climbing down." Besides, President Steyn was still weak-kneed, and would, in Kruger's view, only hamper negotiations, while an acute crisis would be sure to make him take up his stand definitely on the right side. Nothing could have been more mischievous than this policy of alternate bargaining and bluff on Kruger's part. At each small step forward he made his burghers believe that they

had settled everything. Little wonder then that the ignorant mass of the Boers grew steadily more and more excited and desperate, believing as they did that every concession was but the signal for fresh demands from Mr. Chamberlain. In the end the spirit which Kruger had evoked passed beyond his control, and when he was just beginning to realise the need for concession, concession had become impossible.

Mr. Grobler's insolent note of July 12.

The Draft Law was to be laid before the Raad on the 13th. On the 12th Mr. Grobler sent a copy of it to Mr. Greene, with a covering note conceived in a spirit of puerile insolence worthy of the best traditions of the Chinese Tsung-li-Yamên :—

"Seeing that so much interest is taken by you in the question of the franchise in this Republic, I have the honour to transmit you herewith a copy of the Draft Law on naturalisation and full franchise, as now submitted by a Commission, and laid before the First Volksraad for consideration."

Mr. Reitz refuses to delay the law.

To Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, delivered just after, Mr. Reitz replied expressing his satisfaction with Mr. Chamberlain's conciliatory tone, but pointing out that at the termination of the Bloemfontein Conference Sir Alfred had refused to consider the President's proposal as a basis for further negotiation. In any case the whole matter was out of the hands of the Government, which, therefore, regretted that it could not comply with Mr. Chamberlain's request.* In other words the Transvaal rejected Mr. Chamberlain's conciliatory advances on the very ground that he was prepared to discuss less than the Bloemfontein minimum. The assertion that the matter was out of the hands of the Government was, for any one who knew the informal methods of Transvaal legislation, merely another piece of studied impertinence. President Steyn had also urged delay. To him Kruger could hardly use the arguments thought good enough for Mr. Greene. But he urged that delay would be awkward, as the text of the Bill had already been telegraphed to Leyds for publication in Europe. The Draft Law was accordingly pushed forward in the

* C. 9518, p. 40.

Volksraad and the first few clauses passed after prolonged debating, some of the speeches being of a very violent character.

Bond refuses to give Transvaal more than moral support.

On July 14 the Cape Parliament assembled. On that same day Mr. Hofmeyr sent the following urgent telegram to Mr. Smuts in reply to inquiries as to the line the Ministry would take up during the session :—

"Most important suggestions sent from here will apparently not be adopted. The independence of the Republics is in danger. As to colony, utmost prospect held out was moral support. Ministry and Bond have acted up to that. If Parliament goes too strongly same direction there may be change of ministry, with Sprigg or Rhodes backed by Milner. Would your interests be benefitted thereby ? *Verb. sat sap.*"

The seven years' franchise, July 18.

Mr. Hofmeyr did not desist, in spite of his previous want of success, from urging that the last Transvaal scheme should be improved and simplified. The Free State and the Progressive Transvaalers, Mr. Smuts and still more General Joubert, on their side also urged a substitution of a simple seven years' retrospective provision for the complicated provision of the Draft Bill. On the 18th this amendment was carried with only five dissentient votes. In the debate President Kruger urged the reduction on the ground of "honesty and righteousness." The law was finally passed two days later, in spite of a telegram from Mr. Schreiner, sent through Mr. Fischer, urging delay in order to consult with Her Majesty's Government and open a road for a general arrangement on all matters of dispute, and a communication from Mr. Chamberlain regretting that the Transvaal could not see their way to giving Her Majesty's Government opportunity to consider a scheme which, after all, was put forward with the avowed intention of meeting the latter's views.

Sir A. Milner's despatch of July 19.

In his despatch to Mr. Chamberlain of July 19,* Sir Alfred reviewed the new law, pointing out its chief defects and summarizing his conclusions by remarking that it was not an offer that the Uitlanders—especially the British

* C. 9518, p. 45.

Uitlanders—would be at all likely to accept. The ease with which the Transvaal Government had secured this concession, only a week after Mr. Smuts had told the British Agent that the previous proposal represented absolutely the greatest concession that could be got from the Volksraad, only showed, as Sir Alfred pointed out, that the opposition of the Volksraad or the burghers, of which so much had been made at Bloemfontein and since, was a mere delusion. It was difficult even now to believe that the Government could not, if it wished, obtain more liberal terms or introduce simpler conditions. Its refusal to consider any further suggestions had gratuitously introduced an element of difficulty into the situation.

The *Times* announcement. Panic in South Africa.

The real advance made on July 18 was but a trifling one, as Sir Alfred rightly judged. But to Mr. Chamberlain, at a distance and less closely in touch with Boer chicanery, the news of a seven years' franchise retrospective and prospective seemed at first sight welcome tidings indeed. The Boers, so defiant and impracticable a week ago, had suddenly conceded what after all was not so very different from Sir Alfred's Bloemfontein compromise! While still in the first flush of his elation Mr. Chamberlain met the lobby correspondent of *The Times*. On the morning of the 19th an announcement appeared among the "Political Notes" of *The Times* declaring that the crisis might be regarded as at an end and that Mr. Chamberlain had achieved the object he had in view. In South Africa the announcement created a perfect panic. No one could quite realise that there might have been a misunderstanding on the part of Mr. Chamberlain as to the extent of the latest concession. There was a general conviction that the British Government had realised that there was a possible danger of war and had snatched at the first opportunity for beating a graceful retreat, leaving the Uitlanders and its own representatives in the lurch. Even Sir A. Milner and Mr. Greene can hardly have escaped a momentary fear that this might be so. The Uitlander Council sent a despairing telegram to implore Mr. Chamberlain not to depart from the Bloemfontein minimum or accept a proposal which would fail to secure the principle

of racial equality. Mr. Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons on the 20th, in which he expressed the hope that the new law might prove the basis of a settlement, but dwelt on the necessity of getting rid of all such obstructive conditions as might be used to take away with one hand what had been given with the other, caused the alarm to subside somewhat.

Sir A. Milner's despatch of July 26.

On July 26 Sir Alfred again carefully criticised the new law,* pointing out the numerous pitfalls and obstructions encompassing it, quite apart from such serious fundamental objections as the one that the period of seven years counted from the date of registration and not by residence. To quote his own words :—

"The Bill as it stands leaves it practically in the hands of the Government to enfranchise or not to enfranchise the Uitlanders as it chooses. If worked in a liberal spirit its clumsy and unreasonable provisions may be got over. But if it is enforced rigidly, there will be practically unlimited opportunities of excluding persons whom the Government may consider undesirable, nor does the tone of the debate in the Raad leave much doubt as to the spirit in which some at least of the authors of the Bill would like to see it worked. And the worst of it is that should the Bill, through a literal interpretation of its complicated provisions, fail to secure the object at which it avowedly aims, no one will be able to protest against the result."

The bogus conspiracy, May 16. Attempt to inculpate the War Office.

At this point it may be as well to refer to some of the other events which occurred coincidently with the series of negotiations which has just been described. On May 16 a tremendous sensation was caused, not only in the Transvaal but all over Europe, by the report that a number of British officers had been arrested in Johannesburg † for participation in a plot to arm the population, seize the fort and town, and hold them till the arrival of British troops from Natal—the whole in pursuance of instructions from the British War Office. These statements were at once telegraphed to London and to other European capitals by the Transvaal Government,

* C. 9518, p. 51.

† For the details of the story, see C. 9521, pp. 1–24.

and every endeavour was made to foster the suspicion that on the very eve of the Bloemfontein Conference the British Government had been planning a treacherous and unprovoked attack upon the South African Republic. Efforts were also made to implicate the South African League. From beginning to end the whole conspiracy was a bogus affair got up by Chief Detective de Villiers (the same who assisted in the breaking up of the Amphitheatre meeting and procured the false affidavits against the Uitlander petition), by the head of the Secret Service Department, Mr. Tjaart Kruger, youngest son of the President, and by the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Schutte. The pretended conspirators were all secret service agents, with the single exception of a Mr. Nicholls, a respectable miner with a fad for military matters, who had in conversation discussed the possibility of organizing a corps for the protection of the town in case of an attempt to attack it from the fort. This unhappy man was for over two months in prison, subject to constant persecution by his *soi-disant* fellow-conspirators, whose one object was to extract some sort of admission or confession from him. He was refused leave to consult a lawyer except in the presence of the prison officials, and a letter sent by him to the British Agent was withheld for over a week, till the day before his preliminary examination. Fortunately Mr. Greene intervened with promptitude, caused the case to be delayed, and secured a capable lawyer, Mr. Duxbury, to conduct the defence. The most serious irregularities occurred during the trial, but in spite of the efforts of the whole secret service no case could be made out and the prosecution was abandoned on July 25. One of the witnesses at the trial afterwards made an affidavit declaring that he had been offered £200 and an appointment in the secret service by Mr. Tjaart Kruger if he would give evidence to show that there was a conspiracy on the part of the British Government and the League, in order, as Mr. Kruger said, to strengthen his father's hand. There is no proof that Mr. Smuts was directly implicated in these scandalous proceedings, but he seems to have winked at them and to have signed without inquiry the warrants submitted by a detective

Persecution of Mr. Nicholls. Irregularities of the trial. Justification for intervention.

who, on the very day the warrants were signed, had been denounced by the Chief Justice in court as a perjurer. Nor can there be any excuse for the Transvaal Government in letting the case go on long after it had become perfectly evident that the whole thing was fraudulent. Nothing was ever done to any of the officials implicated in the affair, nor was any apology ever addressed to the British Government, or reparation made to the unfortunate victim of the plot. If the British Government had indeed been anxious to provoke hostilities, nothing would have been easier than to have sent an ultimatum demanding a public apology, an indemnity for Mr. Nicholls, and the immediate dismissal of the chiefs of the detective and Secret Service Department and of the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Reitz's arbitration proposal of June 9. Sir A. Milner urges its rejection.

Three days after President Kruger's return from Bloemfontein, on June 9, Mr. Reitz approached the British Government with a proposal for a general treaty of arbitration, providing for an arbitration tribunal whose president should not be either a British or a Transvaal subject. Sir Alfred unhesitatingly urged its prompt rejection, partly on the ground that the particular scheme was unworkable and did not exclude the intervention of a foreign element, but more especially in order to make clear to the Transvaal the whole point and gist of his attitude at Bloemfontein, namely, that arbitration could only be brought about in the friendlier atmosphere created by a settlement of the Uitlander question. Redress of Uitlander grievances must precede all other negotiations, and before that redress was granted the British Government could listen to no proposals for arbitration or for any other concession.

Various events in July.

An edict compelling British Indian merchants in Pretoria to leave the city and remove to an unsanitary location in the suburbs was to have come in force on July 1, but was, owing to the representations of the British Government, postponed for three months. On July 3 the reckless use of revolvers by the Johannesburg police at last led to their being disarmed—a step which, if taken a year earlier, might have averted much mischief. On the 13th Mr. Chamberlain replied to Mr. Reitz's last despatch on the suzerainty

question by reasserting the standpoint taken up by him in previous despatches. On the 15th the Transvaal published a many years belated Greenbook on the annexation of Zambaansland, chiefly with a view to exciting indignation among the burghers against the British Government. On the 18th Mr. Rhodes landed in Cape Town after a visit to Europe, during which he had come to an arrangement with the German Emperor for the passage of the Cape to Cairo telegraph and railway across German East Africa. The arrangement was generally understood as an indication that the policy which inspired the famous Raid telegram had been abandoned. The passage of the franchise law on July 20 was followed in the Transvaal Volksraad by a secret discussion of the dynamite monopoly which nearly led to a dead-lock between the Raad and the President. Kruger adopted a favourite old device and threatened to resign. But the Volksraad stood firm. Kruger's request for a free hand in dealing with the monopoly was refused, and a commission appointed. The more progressive members of the Executive and Volksraad were satisfied both with this result and with Joubert's success in securing the latest reduction in the franchise. On the 27th Mr. Smuts telegraphed to Mr. Fischer:—

"New franchise law passed. Four new members for each Raad for Witwatersrand. Strong commission on dynamite appointed. All's well that ends well."

Military preparations. Mr. Schreiner and the passage of ammunition.

Both sides too now began to look to their military preparations. The British garrison in South Africa, which at the time of the Raid had been only 3,000 men strong, had been gradually increased since then to about 9,000 men. On July 7 it was announced that the Commander-in-Chief was making arrangements in case the failure of negotiations rendered the sending of an expeditionary corps necessary, and that several officers, among their number Colonel Baden-Powell and Colonel Plumer, had been ordered out to South Africa on special service. The Transvaal preparations had been going on for months past, but it was only in July that the Free State began to think seriously of war. On the 8th

General Joubert sent 500 cases of ammunition to Bloemfontein. On the same day the *Gaika* landed at Port Elizabeth 500 rifles and 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition for the same destination. The matter was submitted for Mr. Schreiner's information only the day after the permit had been given for their removal to Bloemfontein. For his conduct in letting so large a quantity of warlike material pass at this critical time, Mr. Schreiner was afterwards violently, and not altogether unreasonably, assailed by the Opposition. The fact is that Mr. Schreiner, who up to the last could not bring himself to face the prospect of war, was nervously apprehensive of the moral effect which would be produced on the Free State by any act which would seem to indicate the mere possibility of open rupture. It was from a similar motive that he subsequently did all in his power, before the actual outbreak of war, to delay the sending of artillery or of troops to Kimberley. One cannot help suspecting that Mr. Schreiner was misled by Mr. Fischer's representations of the Free State attitude into giving some informal pledge to prevent any military precautions being taken which might alarm the Free State. President Kruger was less scrupulous about other people's feelings. On the day that the permit was signed for the passage of the ammunition, he telegraphed to President Steyn suggesting the issue of a proclamation forbidding the export of grain or cattle from the Republics.

British South Africa's unanimous support of Sir A. Milner. The petition. The Natal Assembly.

Meanwhile popular excitement was growing steadily. In the last days of June and the first days of July crowded and enthusiastic public meetings were held in almost all the towns and villages of Cape Colony, Natal, and Rhodesia, and unanimous resolutions were passed supporting the High Commissioner's policy. In July a petition to the Queen was circulated in Natal urging the redress of Uitlander grievances and expressing absolute confidence in Sir Alfred Milner, and was signed by three-quarters of the whole adult male population. A similar petition was started in Cape Colony and Rhodesia, and the total number of signatures amounted by the end of July to 49,241, an enormous figure for so small and scattered a population. On July 19 the

Natal Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a resolution expressing support of the Imperial Government. The resolution was moved by Mr. Baynes and seconded by Mr. Escombe, the ex-Premier. Colonel Hime, the Premier, who had been confined to his bed as the result of an accident, had himself carried from his bed to the House, in order to give the motion his personal support. On the 25th the Natal Legislative Council passed an identical resolution with equal unanimity.* How unanimous Natal sentiment was can be seen from the following extract from Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson's telegram of July 26 :—†

"Men who approved of the retrocession of 1881 as an act of conciliation and justice; men who concurred with me in denouncing the Raid; men who have valuable property in the Transvaal and have much to lose in case of war; men who have much to gain by the maintenance of peace because their interests are bound up in commerce in the Transvaal; men who would be glad to see the maintenance of Transvaal independence; loyal Dutch subjects of her Majesty—from men of all these categories assurances have reached me of their hearty support of the action of Her Majesty's Government, of their belief that permanent peace and prosperity can only be secured by securing equal rights and privileges for Dutch and English throughout South Africa, and of their earnest desire that there should be obtained, even if necessary at the cost of war, a real and effectual settlement."

On the 26th a public meeting of the unenfranchised was held at Johannesburg unanimously rejecting the Transvaal proposals and confirming the declaration of the Uitlander Council.

The colonies support the Imperial Government. Queensland offer, July 11.

The determination to insist on a settlement was not confined to South Africa alone. Australia had sent many miners to the Transvaal and knew something of the nature of Transvaal misgovernment. The Australian colonies expressed their sympathies with the Imperial policy in the strongest fashion. On July 11 the Government of Queensland telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain, offering the services of a contingent in case of a war with the Transvaal; the

* C. 9518, 33, 48, 59, etc. † C. 9521, p. 42.

example was followed by the other Australasian colonies. On July 31 the Canadian Commons passed a resolution condemning in the strongest language the attitude of the Transvaal, and expressing sympathy with that policy of equal rights which had produced such beneficent results in Canada. In England there was a steadily growing resolve to vindicate the claims of the Uitlanders, and to assert the Imperial supremacy in South Africa, though the whole danger of the situation was hardly realized even by responsible statesmen, much less by the public at large.

Opposition of the Cape Dutch to Sir A. Milner's policy.

It must not be supposed, however, that the policy of Sir Alfred Milner and of the Imperial Government met with unqualified approval on every hand. The leaders of the Afrikander party, even when they to some extent co-operated with the High Commissioner, could not forget that they had been elected specially as opponents of that policy. Their representations to Mr. Chamberlain have already been referred to. On June 30 the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church sent an address to Sir A. Milner for transmission to the Queen, urging that the differences between President Kruger's proposals and those of the High Commissioner could not justify the horrors of war. On July 12 a meeting of the Bond was held at Cape Town, and a resolution was passed advocating the adoption of a compromise based on the latest proposals of the Transvaal. It was noted that Mr. Hofmeyr, who presided, did not make any statement at the meeting as to the success of his recent mission, and contented himself with proposing a resolution in favour of arbitration. A number of similar meetings were held by the different branches of the Bond in the Dutch districts of the colony.

Attitude of the Opposition in England. The South African debate.

In England the normal tendency of the Opposition to criticise the policy of the Government was increased by the intense personal hatred felt by a section of the Liberal party for Mr. Chamberlain, and by old party traditions of magnanimous concession to a harmless and much oppressed little nation of farmers. On the other hand it was to some extent kept in check by the confidence felt by leading Liberals in Sir A. Milner's judgment, and by the very strength of the Government's case as set forth in the Bluebooks.

On July 28 the South African situation was formally debated in Parliament. The leaders of the Opposition, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and Lord Kimberley, declared emphatically that there was no occasion for warlike preparations, but did little to suggest what policy should be followed. The Ministry insisted that there could be no going back from the task they had undertaken. On the day before, Mr. Balfour, addressing the Union of Conservative Associations, had declared that the position could not be indefinitely prolonged:—

"If endless patience, endless desire to prevent matters from coming to extremities, if all the resources of diplomacy are utterly ineffectual to untie the knot, other means must inevitably be found by which that knot must be loosened."

Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords sounded an even more significant note of warning:—

"Whatever happens, when the validity of the Conventions is impeached, they belong from that time entirely to history. I am quite sure that if this country has to make exertions in order to secure the most elementary justice for British subjects—I am quite sure they will not reinstate a state of things that will bring back the old difficulties in all their formidable character at the next turn of the wheel. Without intruding on his thoughts, I do not think President Kruger has sufficiently considered this."

Mr. Chamberlain's speech, July 28.

But though firm, the speeches were conciliatory in tone. None more so than that of the Colonial Secretary. After once more reviewing the whole situation, and making clear that there could be no shirking of an issue which involved the whole position of Great Britain in South Africa, Mr. Chamberlain declared emphatically that the Government were desirous of accepting President Kruger's latest proposals as indications of a conciliatory spirit, and that they hoped to find in them the basis for a satisfactory settlement. He assumed that the proposals had been made in good faith as an endeavour to meet the representations of Her Majesty's Government, and that they would give some measure of immediate and substantial representation to the Uitlanders. To make sure of this he had appealed to the President to

agree to a joint inquiry into the effect of the new law by experts chosen from both sides, whose report might form the basis of subsequent agreement. He had used no threats, had issued no ultimatum, and did not mean to be hurried.

Mr. Chamberlain's conciliatory despatch of July 27. The Joint Inquiry.

The proposal above referred to was contained in a despatch dated July 27, a telegraphic summary of which was sent on the same day to Sir A. Milner.* The tone of this despatch, which covers nearly five pages of Bluebook, was one of striking moderation and even friendliness. It began by welcoming the President's latest proposals as a basis for a settlement. It reviewed the proceedings of the Conference, pointing out that the object of Her Majesty's Government had been to secure an amicable settlement of the Uitlander question, which, in its turn, should pave the way to an adjustment of other differences. It expressed a confident assurance that the President, having accepted the principle for which they had contended, would be prepared to reconsider any details which might be shown to be a possible hindrance to the object in view, and a hope that the period might be still further reduced. These were points involving complicated details, and Her Majesty's Government were inclined to think that they had better first be discussed by delegates jointly appointed. After such discussion it might be desirable for Sir A. Milner to come to an agreement with President Kruger by means of another personal conference. At such a conference an agreement might also be arrived at on other outstanding matters and more especially as to the interpretation of the articles, though not the preamble, of the Conventions by an impartial tribunal of arbitration in which no foreign element was included. On the 31st Mr. Chamberlain followed up this communication by a telegram authorising Sir A. Milner to invite President Kruger to appoint delegates to meet the British delegates and frame their report as speedily as possible.

Mr. Chamberlain's object in disregarding the unacceptable provisions by which President Kruger's last franchise scheme was hampered, and in treating that scheme as if it implied Kruger's conversion to the principles advocated by Sir A.

* C. 9518, p. 7.

Mr. Chamberlain's object. Criticism of his policy.

Milner at Bloemfontein, was perfectly obvious. He was extremely anxious to preserve peace, and hoped by his conciliatory suggestion to reduce a heated and dangerous controversy to the level of a practical business-like discussion of matters of detail. It was a vain hope. Kruger had in no sense accepted the principle of equal rights, and nothing was further from his mind than a detailed discussion of his scheme, in which he knew he would get worsted, and probably find the Free State and his own Progressives ready on each single point to admit the reasonableness of further concession. The question may fairly be asked whether Mr. Chamberlain's step was not a mistaken one, and whether the chances of peace, infinitely small as they really were, might not have been better maintained by a consistent and unbending adherence to Sir A. Milner's minimum. In dealing with a semi-barbarous opponent, such as President Kruger undoubtedly was, firmness and patience are above all things essential; any change of attitude, however conciliatory in intention, is sure either to be attributed to weakness or suspected as covering some new and insidious advance. Kruger had been yielding almost weekly since Bloemfontein, and it is conceivable that he might under the same steady pressure have yielded further. On the other hand, it may be said on Mr. Chamberlain's behalf that by his conciliatory attitude he justified himself in the eyes, not only of the British public, but to a very great extent even in the eyes of the Cape Afrikanders.* After all, when the temper of the Boers is considered, it seems almost certain that, even if a five years' franchise had been nominally conceded, some detail would have provoked a controversy which would have led to a breaking off of the negotiations.

* The courageous and patriotic attitude taken up by Mr. Schreiner, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Herholdt, and many of their followers during the past year, is perfectly compatible with a strong disbelief in the wisdom of the policy of intervention on behalf of the Uitlanders, but it is utterly incompatible with the belief, so sedulously fostered in England by some of the more reckless advocates of the Boer cause, that Mr. Chamberlain and Sir A. Milner deliberately planned a war of aggression, and used the franchise negotiations simply as an instrument with which to goad a brave and inoffensive little people into despair.

To Sir A. Milner Mr. Chamberlain's despatch came somewhat as a surprise. Sir Alfred could not but feel that, in spite of its conciliatory language, the despatch could not bridge over the irreconcilable divergence of principle which lay beneath the surface. Still he determined at once to take the utmost advantage of it by enlisting the support of the Cape Afrikanders on its behalf. In this he was entirely successful. The Cape statesmen had already received anxious telegrams from Pretoria declaring that the Transvaal objected to a joint inquiry as an interference with its independence. The tone of these missives created serious alarm in Cape Town. On the 31st Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed urging that Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion should be met in a conciliatory spirit as providing a loop-hole out of the approaching deadlock. On the same day Sir H. de Villiers wrote two letters, in tones of the most earnest warning and remonstrance, to Mr. Fischer and to his brother, Mr. Melius de Villiers, Chief Justice of the Free State. In the former he thus expressed his opinion on the Joint Inquiry:—

Sir A. Milner's surprise. He secures support of the Cape Afrikanders.

"Mr. Chamberlain's speech was more moderate than I expected it would be, and as he holds out an olive branch in the form of a joint inquiry into the franchise proposals, would it not be well to meet him in this matter? . . . The British public is determined to see the matter through, and, if a contest is begun, will not rest until the Transvaal has completely submitted. . . . I do not think that President Kruger and his friends realize the gravity of the situation. Even now the State Secretary is doing things which would be almost farcical if the times were not so serious. . . . The Transvaal will soon not have a single friend left among the cultivated classes. Then there is the Franchise Bill, which is so obscure that the State Attorney had to issue an explanatory memorandum to remove the obscurities. But surely a law should be clear enough to speak for itself, and no Government or Court of Law will be bound by the State Attorney's explanations. I do not know what those explanations are, but the very fact that they are required condemns the Bill. That Bill certainly does not seem quite to carry out the promises made to you, Mr. Hofmeyr, and Mr. Herholdt."

Sir H. de Villiers to Mr. Fischer, July 31.

Sir H. de Villiers to Mr. M. de Villiers.

The second letter is of striking interest for the frankness with which it reviews the whole situation :—

"My dear Melius,—I have just received your letter of the 28th inst. At the present time I think it is better for the Cape Ministry not to move any resolution in regard to the Transvaal question. Besides, while negotiations are pending between the British and Transvaal Governments, it is not advisable to have heated discussions in the two Houses of Parliament. When I was in the Transvaal three months ago, I found that Reitz and others had the most extraordinary notions of the powers and duties of a Cape Ministry in case of war. They are Ministers of the Crown, and it will be their duty to afford every possible assistance to the British Government. Under normal conditions a responsible Ministry is perfectly independent in matters of internal concern, but in case of war they are bound to place all the resources of the colony at the disposal of the British Crown ; at least, if they did not do so, they would be liable to dismissal.

"The debate which took place in the House of Commons since I last wrote to you satisfies me that the British nation is now determined to settle the Transvaal business in a manner satisfactory to themselves. From an intimate acquaintance with what was going on, I foresaw three months ago that if President Kruger did not voluntarily yield he would be made to do so, or else be prepared to meet the whole power of England. I accordingly begged of Kruger's friends to put the matter to him in this way :—On the one side there is war with England—on the other side there are concessions which will avoid war or occupation of the country. Now decide at once how far you will ultimately go ; adopt the English five years' franchise—offer it voluntarily to the Uitlanders—make them your friends, be a far-sighted statesman, and you will have a majority of the Uitlanders with you when they become burghers. The answer I got was :—We have done too much already and cannot do more. Yet afterwards they did a great deal more. The same policy of doing nothing except under pressure is still being pursued. The longer the delay the more they will have to yield.

"I see that Mr. Chamberlain again holds out an olive branch by proposing a joint inquiry into the Franchise Bill. If the President is wise, he will even now at the eleventh hour show a conciliatory spirit, and, if he cannot prevent a partial loss of

independence, he will at all events prevent a total loss. If he appoints irreconcilables on the Commission, and does the whole thing in a haggling spirit, no good will come out of the inquiry. I have never been able to understand why Kruger never attempted to take the Uitlanders into his confidence. He has always kept them at arm's length, with the result that he has entirely alienated them. It is said that there are 21,000 Uitlanders in Johannesburg who support him, and yet no meeting has been held at Johannesburg to compare with the meetings held by his opponents. What I fear is that Kruger may object to the Uitlanders being in any way represented at the joint inquiry, if one should take place, and yet it is impossible to see how a satisfactory settlement can be made without their concurrence. Why should he not appoint as one of his nominees an Uitlander of position, whose integrity and judgment he has confidence in? If none such exists, it would only be a proof of his want of tact and statesmanship in not rallying such people to his side.

"The Pretoria people do not seem to realize the position. When I was there Reitz seemed to treat the whole matter as a big joke. Judging by his conduct in suppressing private telegrams* (paid for) because they contained lies, he must be still treating the matter as a joke. Other incidents show that he is a danger in the present situation. . . . Yours affectionately,

"J. H. DE VILLIERS."

Mr. Schreiner's telegram, August 3.

On August 3 Mr. Schreiner telegraphed to Mr. Fischer on behalf of the Ministry, entreating the Transvaal to welcome Mr. Chamberlain's serious proposition, and to appoint representatives. Both parties had now an opportunity for an honourable and peaceful settlement. The Transvaal should not let a formal point shipwreck the hope of peace.

Kruger resolved to reject Joint Inquiry at all costs.

But all entreaties and reasonings were unavailing. Kruger was resolved at all costs to reject this Joint Inquiry. His obstinacy was no doubt largely due to a genuine and deep-seated suspicion of Mr. Chamberlain's motives—to a fear, perhaps, that the proposal covered an insidious design to thrust the Transvaal back into the position it held in 1881, when its affairs were settled by a Royal Commission. But

* All during August and September the Transvaal authorities exercised a very strict censorship over all telegrams.

even more than that, he dreaded the actual results of investigation.* Investigation meant bringing the Uitlanders into the matter, submitting not only his franchise scheme, but the whole of his Government to their detailed and searching criticism. The evidence produced would inevitably weaken the Free State and the Transvaal Progressives in their support of his policy. Since the Industrial Commission of 1897 he could not even trust his own Commissioners not to be convinced by Uitlander arguments. On the other hand, refusal gave him a single and direct issue—"my independence"—round which he could get his burghers to rally, for which he would almost certainly secure Free State support, and possibly even European intervention. On August 2 he telegraphed to Mr. Steyn:—

"Chamberlain proposes Joint Inquiry. S. A. R. thinks compliance tantamount destruction independence. What are your views? Let Fischer come over."

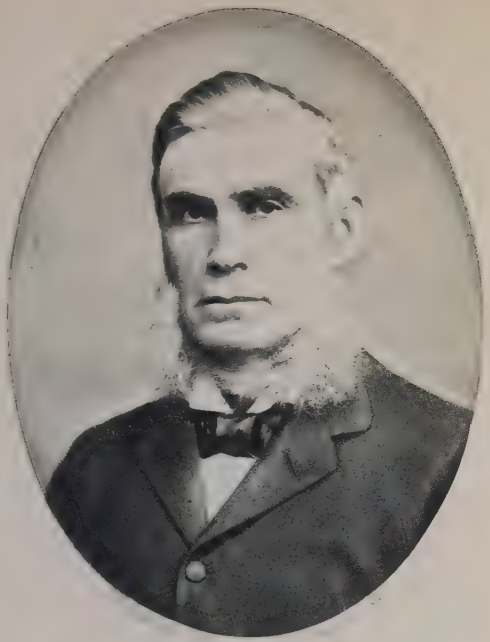
Mr. Fischer likewise opposes Joint Inquiry.

Mr. Fischer's mediation with the Transvaal had been of doubtful value from the very first. He now came out definitely in his true colours as a thorough-going supporter of Kruger's policy. On the 3rd he telegraphed to Mr. Hofmeyr:—

"You cannot expect Transvaal to agree to Joint Commission. They will not regard it as matter of form to have law formally passed submitted to revision by partly prejudiced Commission. Would an English colony submit to it?"

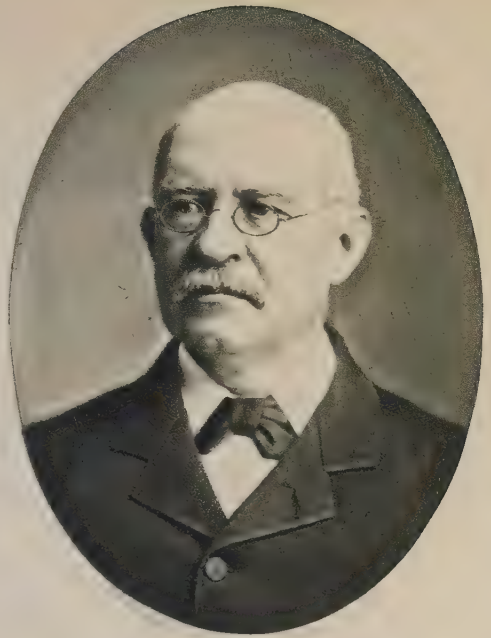
That evening Mr. Fischer left for Pretoria. Before leaving, he had a talk with Mr. Fraser, who entreated him, if he valued the independence of the Transvaal, to do all in his power to induce Kruger to yield. Mr. Fischer's only answer was an uncompromising refusal. Poor President Steyn seems to have been less decided, but he had already

* It is pretty evident from Kruger's reluctance to tolerate any investigation into his affairs that he would never have really submitted the franchise question to arbitration, which would inevitably have involved just such a Commission as Mr. Chamberlain proposed.



THE RIGHT HON.
SIR JOHN HENRY DE VILLIERS, K.C.M.G., P.C.
CHIEF JUSTICE OF CAPE COLONY, 1874.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.



THE HON. JAN. H. HOFMEYR.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

ceased to play a leading part in the control of his own policy. At this stage he seems to have suggested some absurd scheme of an Afrikander mission to England. On the 4th Dr. Te Water, telegraphing for Mr. Hofmeyr, replied that the suggestion was useless. "Let Fischer do his best with Chamberlain's proposals, duly backed by yourself. Have no other advice, see no alternative."

Leyds discourages idea of European intervention.

Simultaneously with his appeals to the Free State, Kruger had made inquiries in Europe, through Dr. Leyds, as to the possibility of intervention on his behalf if he refused the Joint Inquiry. The replies he got were not encouraging. On the 3rd, 4th and 7th, Dr. Leyds sent the following cables from The Hague:—

"My opinion is that in case of war the Germans and French will be well disposed and probably indicate this, but give no real help."

"Expect nothing from the Great Powers. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance here are also of the opinion that a Joint Commission is unacceptable, but strongly advise us not to refuse immediately but to get some delay by asking for explanations. The law should first have effect for a year before there can be any question of an investigation."

"I would advise following counsel of our friends at The Hague that we should gain time, but above all take care not to use any expressions which might afterwards bind Government to acceptance Joint Commission."

The Dutch and German Governments urge Kruger not to refuse definitely.

The Dutch Government, which already in May had urged Kruger to be conciliatory, sent a further despatch on August 4, through the Dutch Consul-General, urging Kruger not peremptorily to refuse the British proposal. On the 15th the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs telegraphed that the German Government entirely shared his opinion as to the inadvisability of declining the proposal, adding that the German Government, like himself, was convinced that any request for intervention to one of the Great Powers at such a critical moment would be barren of result and highly dangerous to the Republic. Transvaal sympathizers in England were equally agreed that the proposal could not be refused. On

Transvaal sympathizers in England urge acceptance of proposal.

the 4th Mr. Montagu White, Consul-General of the Transvaal in London, cabled :—

"I have received from Leyds your cable of Wednesday with argument against proposed Commission and made confidential use of it, but to no purpose. Hyndman knows how despatch was put together, but Courtney, Labouchere, both our friends, and friendly papers without exception give opinion and advice mentioned before ; even those usually optimistic declare a refusal means war and would estrange friends."

In a letter written on the same day Mr. White quoted Mr. Labouchere as saying :

"Don't for goodness sake let Mr. Kruger make his first mistake by refusing this ; a little skilful management and he will give Master Joe another fall. . . . You are such past-masters in the art of gaining time—here is an opportunity ; you surely haven't let your right hands lose their cunning, and you ought to spin out the negotiations for quite two or three months."

About the same time Mr. Labouchere sent some foolish letters, more or less to the same effect, to Mr. White. In these it was asserted that the Liberal Party was, by his speech in the debate, definitely pledged to oppose war, and that the Government were really of the same mind and had imposed the Conference proposal upon Mr. Chamberlain against his will. It is not impossible that this trivial nonsense may have had a mischievous effect in Pretoria, where the political insignificance of its author was hardly sufficiently realized.

Kruger and the fifty Afrikander members.

On the 11th fifty Afrikander members of the Cape Parliament sent an urgent telegram to President Kruger imploring him to accept the Commission, which might in their opinion—

"provide a way out of the existing difficulties which are fast approaching a crisis, with a result which might prove fatal to the best interests, not only of our Transvaal and Free State brethren, but also of the Afrikander party in Cape Colony. . . . We beg your Honour will lay these words, which are only dictated by a

keen sense of our common interests and risks, privately before your Executive and Volksraad."

August 4–9. Mr. Fischer at Pretoria editing despatches and arranging military matters.

Kruger put the inconvenient telegram in his pocket and said no more about it. In reply to a query from Bloemfontein a few days later, he replied briefly: "Saw no necessity lay before Volksraad message from members Cape Parliament." It was armed support and not telegraphic advice that Kruger wanted from Cape Colony.

To return to Mr. Fischer's operations at Pretoria. On his arrival on August 4 he telegraphed to Mr. Steyn that the Volksraad were against the Inquiry and were in favour of making an alternative proposal. The next few days were spent by him in helping to concoct an evasive reply to the British Government in the spirit of Dr. Leyds' recommendation, and still more in discussing military matters with General Joubert. On the 6th he telegraphed:—

"Draft reply prepared. Invites discussion asks questions to gain time. Therefore not yet necessary to deliberate as to calling together Volksraad * or take other steps before my return Tuesday. Shall press that Edgar compensation answer † be softened down. Military matters, especially artillery, seem to me very faulty. Care will be taken to make all necessary preparations."

The draft of the reply was sent to Mr. Steyn, and on the 8th Mr. Fischer again telegraphed: "Don't show reply Cape friends till we have discussed it." In the same telegram he asks Mr. Steyn to put pressure on President Kruger to remove the existing political disabilities of Jews and Catholics, and concludes, "Still busy military matters." The matters referred to were the details of the joint plan of campaign which General Joubert on that day expounded

* *I.e.*, to decide on the question of peace or war.

† *I.e.*, Mr. Reitz's answer to a request made by Mr. Chamberlain, and presented on July 3, for compensation to Mrs. Edgar. The actual answer, which was not given till September 22, offers to submit the matter to the arbitration tribunal to be agreed upon by the two Governments for the settlement of all differences, and bears evident traces of Mr. Fischer's handiwork. *See* Cd—43, pp. 9, 71.

to the warlike advocate from Bloemfontein. On the 9th Mr. Fischer returned home.

Military preparations in Free State. Stoppage of arms at Delagoa by the Portuguese. Mr. Steyn and the dynamite concession.

Mr. Steyn had not been negligent in the interval. Special instructions were sent in the first days of August to the field-cornets to see that everything was in order for immediate mobilization. The drifts and bridges were carefully inspected, and the question of blowing up the latter was discussed. On the 15th Mr. Steyn, on the strength of the statement of a colonial farmer, reported by the Bethulie field-cornet, telegraphed to Sir A. Milner asking whether there was any intention to place British troops at Bethulie Bridge—a rumour which Sir Alfred, in his reply, characterised as unfounded. On the 16th President Kruger telegraphed to Bloemfontein to ask President Steyn if he agreed to a demand being addressed to the British Government for an explanation as to the movement of troops, and received his consent. On that same day the Portuguese authorities at Lorenzo Marques detained a large quantity of ammunition which had arrived for the Transvaal by the German steamer *Reichstag*. This, and the stoppage of other consignments, caused intense excitement at Pretoria. As Portugal had no power to refuse the passage of arms, and could only delay them on the plea of making inquiries, the arms were eventually allowed to pass at the end of the month. About this time, too, the dynamite question again became acute, and Mr. Wolmarans was sent on the 18th to Bloemfontein to try and set Mr. Steyn's mind at rest as to what Kruger was doing with the monopoly. Even Mr. Wolmarans' efforts failed to convince Mr. Steyn, who complained strongly to Kruger that his persistence in buttressing up the concession would seriously estrange his friends. On the 23rd and 25th Kruger sent two telegrams of immense length explaining his reasons. Their general drift is contained in the following sentence: "Sorry policy *re* dynamite will lose sympathy, but cannot alter course adopted."

Uneasiness at Cape Town.

Great was the uneasiness at Cape Town at the absence of any reply to Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, and at the growing

indications that the war fever had completely seized both Republics. On the 12th Dr. Te Water telegraphed to Mr. Fischer in his chief's name:— Mr. Hofmeyr's and Mr. Schreiner's telegrams. August 12 and 13.

"Hofmeyr says don't let Transvaal make so many bites at a cherry but accept invitation without prejudice to independence. Any other course will be fatal to them, to you, and to us."

Mr. Schreiner supported this message in another telegram of strongest expostulation, which only provoked a retort from Mr. Fischer that he was no doubt speaking by rote from Sir A. Milner's instructions. Mr. Fischer also asked if any formal assurance could be got out of the British Government that it would not make the Joint Inquiry a pretext for future intervention. Mr. Schreiner replied on the 13th:—

"Please understand our telegrams yesterday not inspired or requested by High Commissioner, who is not likely now to communicate officially through this channel. Personally, I think Transvaal should approach High Commissioner through Greene if determined to get such assurance as you mention, but frankly and earnestly I feel it would be far wiser to stand upon repeated intimation made by President Kruger, and never contradicted by High Commissioner or Imperial Government, that negotiations as to franchise are not regarded as an admission of any right to interference in internal concerns of Transvaal, but are continued in friendly spirit of the Conference. . . . Remember English Prime Minister gave assurance in debate that there is no intention to interfere with independence of the Transvaal."

This message was by no means well received at Bloemfontein, where Mr. Fischer had thrown himself altogether on the side of war. The annoyance with Mr. Schreiner was increased a day or two later, when he replied to a request for information about probable movements of troops by the curt rejoinder that the Free State had better apply directly to the High Commissioner. Mr. Hofmeyr was communicated with. Was Mr. Schreiner unsound in "the cause" that he should be so touchily loyal to the Imperial Government? Mr. Schreiner's correct attitude.

Mr. Hofmeyr's reply, sent by Dr. Te Water to Mr. Fischer, fairly describes Mr. Schreiner's difficult position:—

"Hofmeyr says whatever Premier's feelings or relations to our people, he is at same time Minister of Crown. As such he has on him claims in two directions, of which he is acquitting himself to best of his ability. He has no control over movement of troops. You better come and have quiet talk. Meanwhile Free State should surely refrain from aggressive step."

The last two sentences show the impression Mr. Fischer's excited and bellicose messages had upon Mr. Hofmeyr. It was evident that he had completely lost all balance and was ready in sheer recklessness to plunge his country into war.

CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Kruger decides to approach British Government with alternative proposals, mainly in order to gain time.

At this point it is necessary to go back to pick up the thread of certain negotiations which had been begun a few days before—negotiations which at one time seemed to have brought matters almost within reach of a peaceful settlement, and have since been the subject of more controversy than almost any other event of the period preceding the war.* Over a week had passed since the formal delivery of Mr. Chamberlain's proposal on August 2 and the Transvaal Government was still undecided what to do. The reply concocted by Mr. Fischer on the 6th was not satisfactory and was never presented. At one time Kruger thought of proposing a second Bloemfontein Conference as an answer to the suggestion for a further conference contained in Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, and as a substitute for the Joint Inquiry. The plan, however, that ultimately commended itself was to approach Mr. Greene personally with some alternative proposal. The discussion of that proposal would serve as an excuse for delaying an answer on the Joint Inquiry, and would help to tide over the remainder of August and September, the two months before the rains when the grass was at its driest, and the country least suited to the operations of mounted men. Besides it was just possible that something might come out of these *pourparlers*. The President was himself beginning to be alarmed at the warlike spirit that he had stirred up among his burghers. Dr. Leyds' cables showed that, for the moment, nothing

* *See* C. 9521, p. 44 *sqq.*; C. 9530, p. 19 *sqq.*; Cd. 43, p. 45 *sqq.*, etc.

could be hoped for from Europe. The Cape Afrikanders were anything but sympathetic. Altogether it might be better to patch up some arrangement, to continue military preparations and political propaganda, and to trust to time and the chapter of accidents to furnish some opportunity for settling old scores with the Imperial Government. The person selected to open these negotiations was the State Attorney, Mr. Smuts. With Kruger delay was the primary object, and the hope of coming to an agreement was only a slight one. Mr. Smuts, however, as a young man in an exceptionally high position, with everything to gain and nothing to lose by the preservation of peace, and with a better appreciation of the power of Great Britain than most of his adopted countrymen, may have been genuinely anxious to secure some compromise.

August 12. Mr. Smuts approaches Mr. Greene. Mr. Greene's attitude.

On the morning of the 12th Mr. Wessels, acting on behalf of Mr. Smuts, approached Mr. Greene with the draft of an amended and simplified seven years' franchise law with increased representation for the gold-fields, and sounded him as to the possibility of its being accepted in lieu of the Inquiry. The British Agent, who had not the slightest inkling of what had been going on in the Boer camp, was greatly surprised at this complete change of attitude. He suggested that if Mr. Smuts really intended to put forward a serious proposal he should do so in person. That same evening Mr. Smuts came. Mr. Greene refused firmly to consider any modified seven years' proposal as dispensing with the necessity for a Joint Inquiry. He pointed out the extremely serious nature of the situation, the impossibility of the Imperial Government's drawing back from the position it had taken up, and the growing excitement on both sides. If an alternative proposal was to be made it could be nothing less than a complete acceptance of the Bloemfontein compromise. At the same time Mr. Greene welcomed Mr. Smuts' approaches. It was the first time, in his three years' experience of Pretoria, that the Transvaal had ever approached the British Government. The fact that the advances were made by Mr. Smuts, and, still more, through Mr. Wessels, predisposed him to consider them

favourably. As a diplomatist, he was bound to leave no opening unexplored which might lead to a peaceful solution, and he would only have put his Government in the wrong if he had not accepted Mr. Smuts' advances in a friendly spirit. Knowing, too, the desire of the British Government to preserve peace at almost all hazards, he encouraged Mr. Smuts to persevere with his idea of an alternative proposal, but impressed upon him the necessity of making that proposal a really adequate solution. Mr. Smuts went away, and the same evening telegraphed to President Steyn the following summary of the conversation:—

Mr. Smuts' summary of the conversation.

"Have to-day had conversation with British Agent. He informed me that object of the proposal for a Joint Inquiry was to bring Johannesburg into the matter, and then go farther than at Bloemfontein. The Uitlanders had been collecting all the facts, which should then come before the Commission, and win the opinion of the world on their side. The only alternative was for this Government to accept the Bloemfontein proposals without reservation in order to prevent investigation and further demands. The High Commissioner's and the Ministry's honour and future were bound up with the Bloemfontein proposals as a minimum."

Misleading character of Mr. Smuts' summary.

In a second telegram Mr. Smuts asked if Mr. Hofmeyr might not induce Sir A. Milner to put his proposal on a seven years' basis, and suggested Mr. Fischer's going to Cape Town—a suggestion which was scouted at the Cape as useless. Mr. Smuts' account of the conversation of the 12th is chiefly interesting as showing the origin of the misrepresentations which subsequently gathered round the whole of these negotiations. It may unhesitatingly be described as a thoroughly misleading account. The last thing Mr. Steyn would gather from it was that it was Mr. Smuts who had approached Mr. Greene with a ready-made alternative proposal which the latter rejected as inadequate. With this account before one it is not difficult to see whence Mr. Steyn derived his idea that the Smuts proposals had been "induced" by Mr. Greene. Equally misleading is the statement attributed to Mr. Greene as to the objects of the Inquiry.

Mr. Greene did refer to the statistics * which the Uitlander Council had been collecting, but about these Mr. Smuts was already fully informed. As a matter of fact it was the knowledge that the Uitlanders had collected facts, and that those facts were extremely unfavourable to the Transvaal contentions, that was one of the chief reasons for the putting forward of an alternative proposal. But it was a reason which Mr. Smuts did not care to state too frankly to Mr. Steyn.

The conversation of August 13. Mr. Smuts' memorandum. His reasonable attitude.

On the following evening Mr. Smuts called again at the British Agency and another most important conversation took place. Mr. Smuts had in the meantime enlarged his proposal and offered what was to all intents the Bloemfontein compromise. The proposal was to be hampered by no conditions, but it was to be assumed that the British Government would not consider their intervention as a precedent and that the suzerainty controversy should tacitly be allowed to drop. Arbitration, on the lines suggested in Mr. Chamberlain's last despatch, was also to be conceded. In discussing the details of the scheme, Mr. Smuts took up a most reasonable attitude which cannot but have influenced Mr. Greene in his consideration of the proposals. On the 14th, Mr. Smuts, after consulting the Executive Council, called again, and it was agreed that Mr. Greene should informally consult the High Commissioner whether the British Government would consider his proposal as an alternative to the Joint Inquiry. The terms of the proposal were: (1) a five years' retrospective franchise, to come into operation immediately; (2) the Rand to get eight new seats in the First Volksraad, making, with the existing gold-fields seats, ten members out of thirty-

* The Uitlander Council had collected returns from a certain number of mines, industrial and commercial houses, as to the period of residence of employés and their qualifications to meet the various taxes imposed by the latest franchise proposals. These returns proved conclusively that the obstacles encumbering the last proposals were a very serious barrier to enfranchisement, and that the difference between a seven years' and a five years' franchise—all restrictions apart—was very great indeed. They also showed that while practically all the Uitlanders who satisfied any reasonable property qualification were English or talked English, hardly any of them knew Dutch.

six for the mining industry, future representation not to fall below this proportion; (3) the new burghers to have equal rights as to the election of President and Commandant-General; (4) the details of the law to be discussed with the British Agent assisted by a legal adviser. The Transvaal in making its proposals assumed that the British Government would not consider that a precedent for intervention had been established, and would not interfere in the future in the internal affairs of the Republic contrary to the Convention. Further, that the British Government would not insist further upon the assertion of suzerainty, the controversy being tacitly allowed to drop. As soon as the scheme became law, arbitration, from which the foreign element was excluded, should be conceded. The memorandum containing these provisions was initialled by Mr. Smuts. Mr. Greene promptly telegraphed the memorandum to Sir A. Milner, following it up by an explanatory telegram recounting the origin of the proposal. On the interference and suzerainty questions he made clear his attitude:—

The assumptions as to suzerainty and interference. Explained by Mr. Greene.

"I have not in any way committed Her Majesty's Government to acceptance or refusal of proposal; but I have said that I feel sure that if, as I am solemnly assured, the present is a *bonâ fide* attempt to settle the political rights of our people once for all, the Government of the South African Republic need not fear that we shall in the future either wish or have cause to interfere in their internal affairs. I have said as regards suzerainty that I feel sure Her Majesty's Government will not and cannot abandon the right which the preamble to the Convention of 1881 gives them, but that they will have no desire to hurt Boer susceptibilities by publicly reasserting it, so long as no reason to do so is given them by the Government of the South African Republic."

The remainder of the telegram summarized briefly the explanations given in conversation by Mr. Smuts of the details of the scheme:—

Mr. Smuts' explanations as understood by Mr. Greene.

"As regards arbitration, they are willing that we should have any of our own judges or lawyers, English or Colonial, to represent us, and that the President or Umpire should be equally English, Colonial, or Boer.

"As regards representation of goldfields in future, State Attorney contends that future extension of franchise to the new population will not, under the proposed scheme, be restricted to the Rand, but will be extended to such other goldfields as are fairly entitled thereto.

"As regards guarantee of Her Majesty's Government, this would be covered by exchange of the note of South African Republic Government and the note of Her Majesty's Government in reply.

"As regards election of President and Commandant-General, should there be any change from the manner of election existing at present, it would have to be discussed between us. Meanwhile new population would be on all fours with old Burghers under existing conditions.

"As regards new law, it has been simplified immensely.

"As regards suggested possibility of further conference, State Attorney anticipates that this may now be allowed to lapse.

"As regards language, the new members of the Volksraad would use their own."

The British Government ready to consider proposal on its merits. The formal proposal of August 19.

Sir A. Milner forwarded the two telegrams as received.* The answer of the British Government was that they would not consider the proposal a refusal of the Joint Inquiry, but would be prepared to consider it on its merits. This answer, as explained by Mr. Greene, was afterwards represented by the Boers, and more especially by Mr. Smuts in the Green-book published a month later, as an unqualified acceptance beforehand of the proposals. That this was only an after-thought, intended to discredit Mr. Greene's good faith, is shown by a telegram sent by President Kruger to President Steyn on the 18th, the day on which he received the reply. Kruger simply says: "Chamberlain has answered that our compromise is not refusal Inquiry, and will be examined on merits. This

* The theory was subsequently put forward that Sir A. Milner wilfully tacked together as one proposal two telegrams of different value, thereby misleading Mr. Chamberlain into asking more than Mr. Greene had agreed to accept. Nothing can be further from the facts. All that Sir Alfred knew of the negotiations was contained in the two telegrams, which he forwarded exactly as received. The difference of their values was no doubt perfectly patent to Mr. Chamberlain, as it is to any reader of the Bluebooks. *See* C. 9521, p. 44.

answer seems not unfavourable and we are sending formal proposals to-morrow." The formal proposals as handed in on the 19th were identical with Mr. Smuts' memorandum, except that for the discussion of the details of the law and of other difficulties with the British Agent, aided by a legal adviser, was substituted a mere expression of willingness always to take into consideration such friendly suggestions as the British Government might wish to convey through the British Agent, and that in the reference to "no further interference *contrary to the Convention*," the last words were omitted.

Temper of the burghers. The Executive regret the proposal.

Mr. Smuts' proposals were in no sense an outcome of a more conciliatory temper on the part of the burghers as a whole. On the contrary, the burghers, whom Kruger had been working up for months past, were in a most warlike mood, and it is quite doubtful how they would have now welcomed the proposals which it would have been quite easy to induce them to accept in June. This temper was not without its influence on the Executive, and no sooner had the proposal been formally made than the Executive regretted it,* and decided to revoke its own offer by substituting for the assumptions contained in it a hard and fast bargain. On the morning of the 21st, Mr. Smuts, whose wishes were probably overridden in this matter, but who still had a hope that the negotiations might not be broken off, sent the following apologetic private missive to Mr. Greene:—

"President South African Republic, in speaking to me yesterday about our despatch to you of Saturday, said that he thought one or two points might have been stated more clearly. It is, therefore, not impossible that you will be requested to-day to cable over a few explanations, that is to say, if the Government South African Republic really deems them necessary."

The proposal revoked, August 21.

A little later the "few explanations" themselves were sent in by Mr. Reitz:—

"In continuation of my despatch of the 19th instant, and with reference to the communication to you of the State Attorney

* There is no necessity to suppose that other influences were at work, such as, *e.g.*, cables from Dr. Leyds promising European intervention.

this morning, I wish to forward to you the following in explanation thereof, with the request that the same may be telegraphed to His Excellency the High Commissioner, as forming part of proposals of this Government embodied in the above-named despatch.

"(1) The proposals of this Government regarding question of franchise and representation contained in that despatch must be regarded as *expressly conditional* on Her Majesty's Government consenting to the points set forth in paragraph 5 of the despatch, viz. :—

"(*a*) In future not to interfere in internal affairs of the South African Republic.

"(*b*) Not to insist further on its assertion of existence of suzerainty.

"(*c*) To agree to arbitration.

"(2) With reference to paragraph 6 of the despatch, this Government trusts that it is clear to Her Majesty's Government that this Government has not consulted the Volksraad as to this question, and will only do so when an affirmative reply to its proposals has been received from Her Majesty's Government."

The "Kaffir bargain" unacceptable. Mr. Hofmeyr's protest.

This was no mere explanation, but a complete alteration of the proposal of the 19th, and one that it was quite impossible for the British Government to accept. The etymological dispute about the suzerainty was doubtful, and the British Government was content to let the matter rest. But a formal abdication of the suzerainty would have been understood and represented as an acknowledgment of the claim to be a "sovereign international state"—it would, in other words, have involved a complete alteration of the London Convention as conceived by the British Government. Nor could the British Government bind itself under no conditions whatever to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal. For the friendly negotiations on the basis of the Bloemfontein compromise was substituted a "Kaffir bargain" of the very sort that Sir A. Milner had again and again at Bloemfontein refused to accept. That the Transvaal themselves knew quite well that they were not merely adding an explanation but revoking their own offer is shown by the fact that they specially

communicated their decision to Mr. Hofmeyr, who replied on the 22nd with a telegram of remonstrance to Mr. Fischer:—

"I understand your feelings, which probably do not differ much from mine. Now that they are dropping all the meat, President included, or at all events more than I even asked them, I do not see why they should make bones of shadows such as suzerainty. Of course, representations will be made by the other side, but I hope all will end in peace."

Sir A. Milner's despatch of August 23.

Mr. Hofmeyr had no doubt that the British Government would consider itself aggrieved. As a matter of fact, on receipt of the revoke Mr. Greene at once telegraphed to Sir A. Milner that the bottom had been knocked out of the negotiations.* Sir A. Milner treated the situation created by the Transvaal proposal, supplemented by the note of the 21st, in a long despatch dated August 23.† He pointed out that the proposal he had suggested at Bloemfontein as a settlement of the Uitlander question had been merely an outline, and that the filling in of that outline might make all the difference between a real and an illusory acceptance of the principle there put forward. It would do little good if the conspicuous features of his proposal were adopted but its whole spirit destroyed by vexatious provisions.‡ The whole manner in which the Transvaal had approached the franchise question hardly inspired enough confidence to warrant the British Government in pledging itself, as requested by the note of the 21st, to an unqualified acceptance of the proposal of the 19th as modified by that note, and to an express renunciation of all future interference without previous careful examination. It was dangerous to take a leap in the dark on so important

* This is in itself sufficient disproof of the theory at one time started by critics of Sir A. Milner's policy, that he made use of the *addendum* of the 21st in order to bring about the failure of unauthorised negotiations to which he objected because they might have resulted in peace. Such a difference of view between the High Commissioner and the British Agent never existed except in imagination.

† C. 9521, p. 60.

‡ Or by the omission of necessary provisions, such as the permissive use of English in the Volksraad, without which the bulk of the Uitlanders would have been practically disqualified.

a question, all the more because the Transvaal seemed designedly to ignore the fact that there were still some differences to settle, such as the position of coloured British subjects and the claim that British subjects should be put on an equality with the subjects of other Powers on various matters such as commandeering.*

Justification of Sir A. Milner's criticisms.

The despatch was, on its publication, very unfavourably criticised by many as a deliberate attempt to prevent a settlement being arrived at. It was undoubtedly written in a spirit of watchful and even jealous criticism. But when the circumstances are fully taken into account, it will be seen that such criticism was fully justified. It was scarcely a month since the Government at home had all but jumped at a completely unsatisfactory solution owing to a misapprehension of the nature of the concessions made. A repetition of such an error was not impossible. The revoke of the 21st had shown that the shifty attitude of the Transvaal had by no means really been modified. There was no guarantee in the formal proposal made that the franchise terms would not be hampered by unsatisfactory conditions. The acceptance of the express conditions of the 21st might put the Imperial Government in a very awkward position if the Transvaal subsequently began to whittle away its proposals. So far from confusing the formal proposal with Mr. Smuts' conversational explanations, Sir A. Milner rigidly guarded himself against such a confusion. He knew quite well that those explanations were quite worthless, and that Mr. Smuts would be disavowed if it suited Kruger to do so. The despatch of the 23rd was a criticism of the modified formal proposal, as it stood, and on the assumption that the Transvaal intended not to give an inch more than they were obliged to give by the letter of the proposal. The immediate sequel proved that Sir Alfred was absolutely justified.

Mr. Chamberlain asks that Mr. Smuts' explanations be included in the formal agreement, August 23.

On the day that the despatch was penned, Mr. Chamberlain, who apparently had not yet heard of the revoke, telegraphed

* All during the summer the Transvaal military authorities had been constantly announcing their intention of commandeering the goods and even the persons of British subjects in the event of war. The question was a pressing one, and by no means a mere abstract point gratuitously brought forward by Sir A. Milner.

drawing attention to the fact that the formal proposal of the 19th differed from Mr. Smuts' conversation in five points, viz.: (1) there were to be no complicated conditions attached to the new law; (2) the new members were to be allowed to use their own language; (3) the Transvaal were to discuss with the British Government any change in the election of Commandant-General or President; (4) they were to discuss with the British Agent, assisted by adviser, the details of the new scheme or any other points which might arise in connection with it; (5) the two Governments were to exchange notes. Mr. Chamberlain expressed the hope that these points might be included in the formal agreement. Of these points only the fourth was an alteration of Mr. Smuts' memorandum, the others were among Mr. Smuts' explanations. But Mr. Smuts' official position and the manner in which he approached Mr. Greene fully justified both Mr. Greene and Mr. Chamberlain in assuming that those explanations had the sanction of his Government. In themselves the demands were absolutely reasonable. Mr. Chamberlain was under the impression that a satisfactory solution had all but been arrived at, and nothing was farther from his mind than to add new demands which might cause a hitch in the negotiations. On the 24th Mr. Chamberlain's request was presented to Mr. Reitz. On the 25th, Mr. Greene received the following note from Mr. Smuts:—

The Transvaal flatly refuses, August 24.

"With reference to the telegram received by you yesterday from your Government, I have now seen State Secretary. Very careful consideration was given to the terms of settlement which were embodied in the formal note of this Government dated 19th August, and I do not believe that there is the slightest chance of an alteration or amplification of those terms. It will be necessary therefore for you to arrive at your decision on the terms stated as they stand."

In other words, the Transvaal Executive absolutely refused to endorse Mr. Smuts' explanations. It is impossible to enter at length into all the controversy which has circled round this refusal and round Mr. Greene's version of the conversation of the 13th. There can be little doubt that

The dispute as to Mr. Smuts' admissions. The charge of breach of faith.

Mr. Smuts admitted more in conversation to Mr. Greene than the Executive was prepared to adopt—possibly more than he even mentioned to the Executive. That much is apparent even from the highly disingenuous and garbled version of the negotiations which Mr. Smuts published in a Greenbook on September 22. As to the language question, Mr. Smuts flatly denied that he had ever agreed that the new members should use their own language. The facts apparently are that he quite agreed with Mr. Greene as to the reasonableness of the concession, and declared that it was not a point on which there ought to be any difference between the two Governments. He may not actually have said that the permissive use of English would form part of the Transvaal proposal, but he certainly fully justified Mr. Greene in believing that the Transvaal were willing to make the concession. The whole controversy only affords another illustration of the peculiar style of semi-official negotiation which Transvaal officials habitually indulged in—of which perhaps the most flagrant case was the repudiation of the negotiations with the mining representatives in March 1899. The attempt was subsequently made to represent Mr. Chamberlain's request as an additional demand made after he had induced or "enticed" the Transvaal proposal by a definite acceptance. Of that definite acceptance Kruger's telegram of the 18th showed no trace. Nor did Mr. Smuts in any way represent himself as ill-used when he telegraphed to Mr. Fischer on the 25th "Chamberlain asks for English in Raad and Presidential election not altered without consultation. We have refused, and I suspect settlement is now going to break off." The whole story of the British breach of faith was not invented till Mr. Fischer's visit to Pretoria on September 1. The real fact is that the Executive had regretted their proposal, and after their first revoke were only too glad to break off negotiations altogether. On the 28th President Kruger telegraphed to President Steyn:—

Kruger determines that Great Britain must either climb down or fight.

"We had hoped things might come right, but now we expect reply to our proposal will be unfavourable. Replies to these

Sir W. Conyngham Greene, K.C.B.,

British Agent at Pretoria, August, 1896--October 11, 1899.

Photo by Elliott & Fry

despatches can now be stronger, and must justify us before the world."

Kruger had made up his mind to concede nothing beyond what he had conceded in July, and to force Mr. Chamberlain to climb down or fight. He had little doubt which it would be. His past experience and his ignorance of the actual state of feeling in England persuaded him that, when it came to the actual issue of peace or war, Mr. Chamberlain could never withstand the pressure brought to bear by the Peace party. Moreover, like most of his burghers, he believed that the Queen would never consent to war, whatever the circumstances. Still, if by any hazard his calculations proved mistaken, he was ready to face the alternative. From this moment onwards, the Transvaal despatches had no other object than to mark time till the rainy season, and to try and put the British Government in the wrong by offering what it was quite certain that the British Government would not accept.

August 26. Mr. Chamberlain's Highbury speech.

On the 22nd Mr. Chamberlain published the accumulated correspondence on the suzerainty question, and the British public now learnt for the first time the nature of the demand made by Mr. Reitz, and realized that the dispute was not merely about an uncertain word, but about the whole character of the relations of the Transvaal to the Imperial Government. By the 26th Mr. Chamberlain had heard, not only of the revoke of the 21st, but of the flat refusal to add Mr. Smuts' admissions to the proposal. He promptly took the opportunity of a garden-party in his own grounds at Highbury to warn the Transvaal in the strongest terms of the danger it was running :—

"I cannot truly say that the crisis is passed. Mr. Kruger procrastinates in his replies. He dribbles out reforms like water from a squeezed sponge, and he either accompanies his offers with conditions which he knows to be impossible, or he refuses to allow us to make a satisfactory investigation of the nature and the character of these reforms. . . . The sands are running down in the glass. The situation is too fraught with danger, it is too strained for any indefinite postponement. The knot must

be loosened, to use Mr. Balfour's words, or else we shall have to find other ways of untying it; and if we do that, if we are forced to that, then I would repeat now the warning that was given by Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords, and I would say, if we are forced to make further preparations, and if this delay continues much longer, we shall not hold ourselves limited by what we have already offered, but, having taken this matter in hand, we will not let it go until we have secured conditions which once for all shall establish which is the paramount Power in South Africa, and shall secure for our fellow-subjects there, at all events, those equal rights and equal privileges which were promised to them by President Kruger when the independence of the Transvaal was granted by the Queen, and which is really the least that in justice ought to be accorded to them."

The despatch of August 28. A qualified acceptance.

But Mr. Chamberlain did not follow this warning by a "strong" despatch. On the contrary, considering all the circumstances, nothing could have been milder than the reply sent on the 28th to the Transvaal proposal. Acting upon Sir A. Milner's suggestion, Mr. Chamberlain made no reference to the disavowal of Mr. Smuts' explanations or to the alteration of one of the clauses of Mr. Smuts' memorandum, but simply treated the Transvaal proposal as it stood. As the Transvaal objected to a joint inquiry, and had withdrawn the offer of discussion with the British Agent and a legal adviser, he agreed that the British Agent should make his own inquiries, and then, if necessary, make those suggestions which the Transvaal had, on the 19th, declared they would be prepared to take into consideration. He hoped that the Transvaal would omit complicated conditions from their law, and wait to receive the British Agent's suggestions before submitting the law to the burghers. With regard to the "express conditions" of the 21st, Mr. Chamberlain made no reproaches to the Transvaal. As regards intervention, Her Majesty's Government hoped that the fulfilment of the promises made and the just treatment of the Uitlanders would render further intervention on their behalf unnecessary, but they could not divest themselves of their rights under the Convention or the ordinary obligations of a civilised power to its subjects. As regards suzerainty, they would refer the

Transvaal to the second paragraph of Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of July 13, which stated that they had no wish to continue to discuss the question with the Transvaal, whose claim to be a "sovereign international" State they did not consider warranted by law or history. As regards arbitration, they agreed to the discussion of the scope and form of a tribunal from which foreigners should be excluded, and suggested that a further conference at Cape Town between President Kruger and Sir A. Milner should be immediately arranged. They would also remind the Transvaal that there were some questions not settled by the franchise and not proper subjects for arbitration which might also be considered at the proposed conference. In other words, Mr. Chamberlain accepted the Transvaal proposal of the 19th but refused the "rider" of the 21st, while at the same time abstaining from directly pressing for any of the concessions agreed to informally by Mr. Smuts.

The policy of defiance.

If the Transvaal had any genuine desire to persist in their offer of the 19th, but wished to have some more precise guarantee on the questions of suzerainty and interference, they would naturally have replied to this despatch by a request for fuller explanations on these points, or have again consulted Mr. Greene. Instead of that, they determined, in their folly, to treat Mr. Chamberlain's qualified acceptance as a flat refusal, and to make this an excuse for directly breaking off all negotiations. Immediately on the receipt of the despatch, Mr. Smuts and Mr. Grobler concocted a draft reply, which unfortunately does not appear to have yet been discovered anywhere. It was vigorous enough to provoke a strong remonstrance from Mr. Fischer, to which its authors replied on the 31st :—

"Our answer was hasty, but it is no use indulging in sophistries. The only thing that can make an end of the present solution is to make Her Majesty's Government understand we will not go further under threats. They must then make peace or war. Our burghers are much excited about long useless negotiations."

On the same day Mr. Smuts, in pursuance of the policy of reckless defiance, decided to arrest Messrs. Monypenny

Attempted arrests of Johannesburg editors, September 1.

and Pakeman, editors of the Johannesburg *Star* and the *Leader*, and Mr. Hosken, the chairman of the Uitlander Council, on a charge of high treason, in order to strike terror into the hearts of the Uitlander community, and to show to the British Government how it intended to treat those Uitlanders who ventured to clamour for redress of grievances. Mr. Monypenny and Mr. Hosken escaped, but Mr. Pakeman was seized and imprisoned. Two days later the charge was reduced to an offence under the Press Law, and he was liberated on bail, undoubtedly owing to Mr. Fischer's representations. On the 4th Mr. Smuts publicly announced that the arrests had been without his authority—a demonstrable falsehood, and one which does not increase the value of his assertions with regard to the controversy with Mr. Greene. Mr. Smuts' action created a perfect panic at Johannesburg, and most of the Uitlanders who had been identified with the Reform Movement now made their way across the border.

Mr. Fischer at Pretoria. The Transvaal reply of September 2. Not meant as acceptance of the Joint Inquiry.

Mr. Fischer had hurried off to Pretoria on the 31st, and reported the next afternoon that he had been busy all day with a draft reply "based on the one we criticised, but more diplomatically put." Mr. Fischer disliked violent language or violent action when there was nothing to be gained by it, and now insisted on restraining the exuberance of Transvaal arrogance. On September 1 the Transvaal handed Mr. Greene, for his information, the draft,* dated August 12, of an answer to Mr. Chamberlain's proposal of August 2. The draft was couched in the spirit of Dr. Leyds' advice to gain time but say nothing which could be construed as an acceptance of the Joint Inquiry. On the 2nd Mr. Fischer's reply to Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of August 28 was presented. It begins by regretting the refusal of the British Government to accept the Transvaal proposal, and declaring that the proposal had accordingly lapsed. The rest of the despatch is mere padding, down to the last clause, which remarks that the proposal for a joint inquiry as contained in the telegraphic summary handed in on August 2 differed somewhat from the formal despatch of July 27 since received,

* C. 9530, p. 29.

and that the Transvaal would therefore be glad to learn how the proposed Commission was to be constituted. The clause is drawn up in a manner calculated to defy all comprehension, but at first sight it would seem to convey an acceptance of the Joint Inquiry. Subsequently, when it became obvious that there could be no question of going back to the position of affairs at the end of July, both Mr. Fischer and the Transvaal Government declared that their despatch of September 2 contained a definite acceptance of the Joint Inquiry. For a refutation of this pretence it is enough to quote a telegram sent on the 2nd by Mr. Fischer to his President:—

"They won't hear of Joint Commission, even with request for assurance of independence."

So, too, on the 7th, Mr. Reitz informed the press that the despatch had accepted the proposal for a joint conference, but not for the Joint Inquiry. As a matter of fact, it was only on the 8th that, yielding to Mr. Steyn's representations, the Transvaal informed Mr. Greene that their despatch had been meant as an acceptance.

The debate in the Raad on the movements of British troops, September 7–8.

On the 6th Mr. Reitz asked for an explanation of the "alleged massing of British troops" on the ground that his Government wished to answer questions on the subject in the Raad. To this astonishing demand Sir A. Milner replied curtly that he did not know what Mr. Reitz referred to. The British troops were in South Africa to protect British interests and provide against eventualities; their number and position was no secret. This reply was on the 7th discussed by the Raad in a violent and aggressive debate, most of the members declaring that war was inevitable, and some even urging that it had better be begun at once so as to be got over quickly. The President made a long and excited speech, but urged the Raad to wait for Mr. Chamberlain's reply to the despatch of the 2nd. If that proved conciliatory, peace might yet be possible. He had given a great deal, but he could not give his independence. They had asked for his trousers, and he had given them; then for his coat, he had given that also; now they wanted his life, and that he could not give. But he had reason to hope that things might

still come right. His "secret reports" told him that in England probably a majority were "in favour of Justice." The Lord carried the hearts of all nations—and even the heart of Mr. Chamberlain—in his hand. Perhaps the English people might rise to resist Mr. Chamberlain, or perhaps Mr. Chamberlain's heart might be turned and he might see Justice. A resolution was finally passed on the 8th to the effect that if war broke out the Republic would not be to blame.

Alarm of the Cape Ministry. Mr. Hofmeyr's view of Sir A. Milner's policy.

The war madness of the Transvaal created the utmost consternation among the Cape Ministry. On August 30 the Bond members sent a telegram asking what had become of their entreaty to accept the Joint Inquiry. Kruger replied through Bloemfontein, "Tell Afrikander members thanks for kind message, will do our best to preserve peace." On September 1 Dr. Te Water telegraphed to Mr. Steyn:—

"I cannot believe any one considers only solution is plunging country into horrors of war. Do whatever possible to induce Pretoria to accept what seems inevitable."

A telegram sent on the following day, perhaps in answer to a query whether the High Commissioner would really face the prospect of war, is of exceptional interest, as giving clearly Mr. Hofmeyr's view of Sir A. Milner's attitude:—

"Hofmeyr gathers prevailing impression, which is also his own, is that High Commissioner would much prefer to gain concessions and settlement without war, but will not shrink from war if object cannot otherwise be attained. Friends here cannot do much more. Simplify Franchise Law. Let memorandum of August 21 be withdrawn, and franchise treated on own merits. Do not obstinately refuse to go Conference, if not Cape Town say Norval's Pont."

The despatch of September 2 puzzled the Cape Afrikanders greatly, and Mr. Fischer's vague explanations that it was an acceptance of the Joint Inquiry hardly reassured them. The Raad debate was another disappointment, and on the 8th

Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed to Mr. Fischer: "We sincerely regret tone of debate in Volksraad. Some of the speeches are worse than Chamberlain's."

In Cape Colony itself the Ministry had its troubles. On August 28 Sir Gordon Sprigg moved the adjournment of the debate to bring forward the question of the removal of arms from Cape Colony into the Free State. Mr. Schreiner's explanations did not suffice to appease the indignation of the opposition, which was increased by some not very happy phrases in which Mr. Schreiner indicated the policy he was resolved to pursue in the event of war. He declared that if the day of storm came he would endeavour to keep the Colony as a little port not to be riddled or rent by the storm, and to maintain for it a position of standing apart and aloof from the struggle, both with regard to its forces and with regard to its people. These remarks were not unnaturally taken at the time to portend a sort of declaration of neutrality on the outbreak of war. What Mr. Schreiner really meant was, however, only that he would urge the Governor not to call out the forces of the Colony to invade the Republics, because he believed that such a step would make it more difficult to prevent the Dutch farmers from rising. It must be remembered that he never at that time contemplated the possibility of the invasion of the Colony by the Boers, and, in fact, during that very debate he had read out a telegram from President Steyn declaring that the reports that the Free State contemplated aggressive action were ridiculous, false, and malicious.

The Cape Assembly. Debate on the passage of arms. Mr. Schreiner's "neutrality" speech, August 28.

The general situation had meanwhile become intolerably strained. It was perfectly evident that the Transvaal meant to go to war on the slightest provocation, and British South Africans, at any rate, were convinced that, even if an agreement were temporarily arrived at, the Transvaal was determined to break it at the earliest possible opportunity. The whole situation under which the Bloemfontein compromise might have been successfully carried through in practice had ceased to exist. The attitude of the Transvaal in its successive franchise proposals had convinced the Uitlanders that no reliance could be put in its good faith.

Extreme strain of the situation.

They clamoured more and more excitedly * for guarantees without which they were unwilling to risk taking up Transvaal citizenship—guarantees such as demolition of the forts and disarmament of the Boers, representation proportional to population, and a score of others, which they must have known could only be obtained by the sword. The fact is that, like the mass of the Transvaal burghers, they had come to believe that no peaceful settlement was any longer possible, and they regarded with terror the prospect of an indefinite continuation of useless negotiations. And not the Uitlanders alone, but the whole British population of South Africa were unanimous in demanding that the Imperial Government should insist on a prompt settlement of the crisis. On August 31, when the last negotiations had broken down, and it was already evident to all on the spot that the Transvaal had determined to concede nothing, Sir A. Milner telegraphed:—

Sir A. Milner urges the Government to terminate the state of suspense, August 31.

"I am receiving representations from many quarters to urge Her Majesty's Government to terminate the state of suspense. Hitherto I have hesitated to address you on the subject, lest Her Majesty's Government should think me impatient. But I feel bound to let you know that I am satisfied, from inquiries made in various reliable quarters, that the distress is now really serious. The most severe suffering is at Johannesburg. Business there is at a standstill; many traders have become insolvent; and others are only kept on their legs by the leniency of their creditors. Even the mines, which have been less affected hitherto, are now suffering owing to the withdrawal of workmen, both European and native. The crisis also affects the trading centres in the Colony. In spite of this, the purport of all the representations made to me is to urge prompt and decided action; not to deprecate further interference on the part of Her Majesty's Government. British South Africa is prepared for extreme measures, and is ready to suffer much in order to see the vindication of British authority. It is prolongation of the negotiations, endless and indecisive of result, that is dreaded. I fear seriously that there will be a strong reaction of feeling against the policy of Her Majesty's Government if matters drag. Please to under-

* *See* C. 9530, p. 9 *sqq*.

stand that I invariably preach confidence and patience—not without effect. But if I did not inform you of the increasing difficulty in doing this, and of the unmistakable growth of uneasiness about the present situation, and of desire to see it terminated at any cost, I should be failing in my duty."

On September 6 a public meeting at Pietermaritzburg unanimously resolved that continuance of the negotiations would lead to no satisfactory settlement, and that Her Majesty's Government should take action to enforce its demands as the Suzerain Power. On the 7th a similar meeting at Cape Town telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain imploring prompt termination of the existing tension, and recording unabated confidence in Sir A. Milner.

September 8. Cabinet meeting.

Such was the situation when the Cabinet met on September 8. It was quite evident that the Transvaal had completely revoked its own proposals, and was now determined to concede nothing beyond what had been conceded in July. The last despatch was purely dilatory. Whether the Transvaal hoped by its defiant attitude to intimidate the Government into an abandonment of the Uitlander claims, or to provoke a violent peace-at-any-price reaction in England, or whether it was actually resolved to go to war and only wished to gain time to complete its preparations, was more than the Cabinet could judge. But at any rate it was quite clear that there was no longer any room for negotiations in the spirit of the Bloemfontein Conference. The Transvaal, by the whole temper and spirit in which it had carried on the negotiations, had created a situation in South Africa for which a five years' franchise was no longer an adequate remedy. The remedy could only be found in a firm and unmistakable assertion of the determination of the Imperial Government to maintain its position of paramountcy in the country. It was no longer the failure of the Transvaal to observe the spirit of the Conventions in its treatment of the Uitlanders with which the Cabinet had to deal. It was the general situation created by the policy which the Transvaal had consistently pursued since the restoration of its independence. What was at stake was

the whole position of Great Britain in the eyes of South Africa, of the great self-governing colonies, and of the whole world.

Reinforcements ordered from India.

It was plain that the Transvaal would now yield, if at all, only to the threat of force. If it did not yield the British possessions were in imminent danger of being overrun by the armed forces of the Republics. To provide against this contingency the Cabinet now decided to send a force of 10,000 men to South Africa, of which the greater part was to come from India. Some small reinforcements had been sent to South Africa during August, and, including these, the total force in Cape Colony and Natal would by the middle of October be brought up to some 22,000 men, a figure at that time believed by the military advisers of the Government sufficient for purely defensive purposes, and at the same time imposing enough to make the Transvaal realize that the Government were in earnest. Having decided on this measure the Cabinet resolved to send a further despatch to the Transvaal, giving it one more opportunity to accept its own proposals of August 19, but forcibly worded and plainly intimating that negotiations on the basis of the Bloemfontein compromise had reached a final stage, and that, failing an agreement now, Her Majesty's Government would no longer negotiate but dictate its own settlement.

The despatch of September 8. The last offer of the Bloemfontein Compromise.

That same night Mr. Chamberlain sent a telegraphic despatch * embodying the policy of a unanimous Cabinet. The despatch declared that Her Majesty's Government absolutely repudiated the claim of the Transvaal to be a sovereign international state and could not consider any proposal which was made conditional on acknowledgment of that claim. But they could not now consent to go back to the proposals for which the note of August 19 was intended as a substitute, especially as they were satisfied that the law embodying those proposals was insufficient to secure the immediate and substantial representation which they had always had in view, and which the Transvaal admitted to be reasonable. Moreover, the presentation of the note of August 19 indicated that the Transvaal had itself recognized that its offer might

* C. 9521, p. 64.

with advantage be enlarged without injuring the independence of the Republic. Her Majesty's Government were still prepared to accept the offer made in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of the note of the 19th, *i.e.*, the offer of a five years' franchise, eight seats in the Raad, and the right to vote for the President, provided that an inquiry, whether joint or unilateral, showed that the new scheme would not be encumbered by conditions nullifying its purpose. In this connection they assumed that the new members of the Raad would be permitted to use their own language. Acceptance of these terms would in all probability render any further intervention unnecessary. In view of the danger of prolonging the strain which had already caused so much injury to South Africa, they pressed for an immediate and definite reply. If their proposal were acceded to they would arrange at once for a Conference between President Kruger and the High Commissioner to settle the details of the proposed tribunal of arbitration. The despatch ended with the warning that if the Transvaal reply were negative or inconclusive, Her Majesty's Government reserved to themselves the right to reconsider the situation *de novo* and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement.

Reasons against reverting to Joint Inquiry.

The tone of the despatch was strong and imperious, very different from that of its predecessors. But soft words were no longer any use, while strong ones might possibly still bring the Transvaal to listen to reason. Mr. Chamberlain has been much criticised for refusing to consider the proposal he had himself made six weeks before. But the criticism is a purely verbal one. It was out of the question now to go back to the state of affairs at the end of July. The proposal for a joint inquiry had been made by Mr. Chamberlain at a time when he believed that the Transvaal Government was showing a more reasonable and conciliatory attitude, and would be not unlikely to concede even a little further if it could be spared the humiliation of having its latest proposal rejected *in toto* just after it had been passed. When the proposal was made, Mr. Chamberlain had only had telegraphic summaries of the effect of the law. Since then he had had time to study in detail the law

itself and the criticisms passed upon it by Sir A. Milner and by the parties directly affected. Since then, too, the temper of the Boer Government had become absolutely uncompromising and defiant. An acceptance of the Joint Inquiry could only have ended in a deadlock a few weeks later, while prolonging the strain of the situation and damaging the prestige of the Imperial Government in South Africa. The real fact is that the despatch of September 8, whatever its form, was not really a continuation of negotiations either about the Joint Inquiry or about the subsequent Transvaal proposals. It was simply a statement that the period during which the Bloemfontein compromise was open for acceptance by the Transvaal was drawing to a close. If that despatch had been presented in the middle of June, there might have been some reason for saying that the Government were treating the Transvaal in a high-handed fashion. In September anything less definite would have been a mere sign of feebleness of purpose.

Mr. Greene asks for immediate reply. Sir A. Milner consents to an extension. Mr. Hofmeyr's entreaties.

The despatch asked for an immediate and definite reply. Accordingly Mr. Greene, in presenting it on the 12th, gave Mr. Reitz to understand that he would require an answer within forty-eight hours. But on the 13th Sir A. Milner telegraphed to Mr. Greene to explain that the forty-eight hours should not be regarded as a fixed period, and that if the Transvaal considered the time mentioned insufficient, they should not be bound to make their reply within it. On the same day Mr. Hofmeyr telegraphed to Mr. Fischer an urgent appeal to persuade the Transvaal to close with Mr. Chamberlain's offer before it was too late. The reason he puts forward is the one that underlay his whole conduct during the crisis. "Mind, war will probably have fatal effect on Transvaal, Free State, and Cape Afrikander party." Mr. Fischer replied recklessly and defiantly. On the 14th Mr. Hofmeyr turned to President Steyn, who was believed not yet to have given up all hope of peace :—

"I suppose you have seen our wires to Fischer and his replies, which latter I deeply regret. The 'to be or not to be' of the Transvaal, Free State, and our party at the Cape, depends upon this decision. The trial is a severe one, but hardly so severe as

outrageous despatches received by Brand from Wodehouse and Barkly. Enemy then hoped Brand would refuse, as Transvaal's enemy now hope Kruger will do; but Brand conceded, and saved the State. Follow Brand's example. Future generations of your and my people will praise you."

On the 15th Mr. Hofmeyr sent two more telegrams to President Steyn through Mr. Herholdt. The first declared that the Transvaal had always conceded at the wrong time and in the wrong manner. Now when troops would land, demands would naturally rise: "Remember Sibylline books." The second telegram is interesting for the bitterness of the feeling displayed:—

"You have no conception of my bitter feelings, which can hardly be surpassed by that of your and our people, but the stronger my feelings the more I am determined to repress them when considering momentous questions of policy affecting the future weal or woe of our people. May the Supreme Being help you, me, and them. Have not seen High Commissioner for weeks."

Kruger's reply to Mr. Hofmeyr.

To these despairing entreaties from Cape Town, duly transmitted to Pretoria, Kruger replied on the 15th:—

"Your telegram received. However much we recognise and value your kind intentions, we regret that it is no longer possible for us to comply with the extravagant and brutal requests of the British Government. It was in co-operation with you, and at your suggestion, that we reduced the franchise and have accepted a joint commission of inquiry—under the same impression as you probably also shared, that peace might thus be secured. It all helped nothing. Our franchise proposal of five years was under the most express declaration that the British Government on its side should accept our conditions, and we had informal assurances that they would be accepted. We are firmly resolved to go no step further than we have gone already, and are convinced that we cannot accept Chamberlain's proposal of a franchise after five years, as that would take away all guarantees for our independence contained in our proposal. We are sorry not to be able to follow your advice, but point out that you yourself let it be known that we had your whole approval if we gave the present franchise as

we were doing. We are deeply impressed by the seriousness of our situation, but with God before our eyes we feel that we cannot go further without endangering, if not entirely destroying, our independence. Government, representatives and people are unanimous on this point."

The most noteworthy features of this remarkable missive are the absolutely garbled account of the August negotiations, in which a readiness to consider the proposal of the 19th on its merits is twisted into an assurance to accept the Kaffir bargain of the 21st, and the unkind cut at the Afrikanders for having publicly declared their satisfaction with Kruger's concessions in July.

The Transvaal reply of September 15. A flat refusal.

On the same day Mr. Reitz handed in to the British Agent the Transvaal reply * to the despatch of the 8th, which Mr. Grobler had just brought back from Bloemfontein, where it had been doctored up by Mr. Fischer. The reply was a flat refusal, combined with what had by then become the Transvaal official version of the August negotiations. It regretted that the British Government had rejected the proposals which it had itself induced by suggestions which the Transvaal had considered equivalent to an assurance that they would be acceptable. The Transvaal had no intention needlessly to recapitulate its claims to an independent status as defined by the London Convention, and had only endeavoured to put an end to the existing tension by a proposal which it supposed to be constituted, "both in spirit and in form," in such a way as to be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government. The Transvaal Government could not disguise from themselves the fact that their proposal conceded so much that they ran the risk not only of being disclaimed by the Volksraad but of imperilling the independence of the State. But against that they set the threatening and undoubted danger to their independence arising out of the claim of suzerainty made by Her Majesty's Government, from the interference of that Government in the internal affairs of the Republic, and from the want of a proper method of automatically settling disputes. The conditions attached to their pro-

* C. 9530, p. 11.

posal were "the only consideration for its offer." The Transvaal had never recognized their proposal of August 19 as a reasonable proposal without the conditions contained in it and "repeated" in the note of August 21. If those conditions were unacceptable they could not understand on what grounds of justice they could be expected to grant the rest. Still less could they understand why, when Mr. Chamberlain had declared that he would not consider the proposal of August 19 a refusal of his invitation to a joint inquiry, he should now, "as soon as the invitation was accepted, as was done by this Government in its note of September 2," refuse to agree to it. They could not see how Mr. Chamberlain had since discovered, without an inquiry, that the July franchise law was inadequate. They were still always prepared to abide by their acceptance of the invitation to a joint inquiry. The despatch also contemptuously rejected the suggestion "that any other than the language of the country" should be allowed in the Volksraad, and declared that the Transvaal was firmly resolved "to abide entirely by the London Convention as its efforts have been continuously to do."

Disingenuous character of the reply.

It was a thoroughly disingenuous despatch, written mainly with the object of creating an official version of the breakdown of the August negotiations in order to influence public opinion among Boer sympathizers in South Africa and elsewhere. There had been no assurance that the proposals of August 19, still less the conditions of August 21, would be accepted. The "consideration" for the proposals of August 19 had not been any conditions about suzerainty or intervention, but an agreement to drop the invitation to a joint inquiry. The proposals of August 19 contained no conditions but only certain assumptions; the conditions were only imported later when the Transvaal had determined to revoke its offer. Lastly, the Joint Inquiry into the July franchise, which was now so ostentatiously accepted, after it had become certain that Mr. Chamberlain would not continue with it, was not accepted in the Transvaal despatch of September 2, but only referred to in such terms that it might be rejected or not as might be thought most convenient.

Laws providing for wholesale confiscations.

A day or two before this reply two new laws were brought before the Volksraad, the one empowering the Government to withdraw the rights of owners of mining property at its discretion and make the properties over to others or develop them itself, taking over the plant at a valuation fixed by the State Mining Engineer; and the other providing for the confiscation of the property of all persons guilty of public violence, high treason, *læse Majesté*, or incitement thereto, including persons outside the Republic who formed relations with foreign Powers or their representatives in order to persuade them to act inimically to the Republic. These were sweeping measures. It would not be difficult to prove that most of the leading Uitlanders had had communications with one representative or another of the British Government. The confiscation of their property and the working of the mines would provide the sinews of the war that was now inevitable. At the same time a thorough inspection was made of all the mines, to discover exactly the amount of dynamite, coal, and provisions stored in them.

Various events in the middle of September. Attitude of Mr. Steyn.

On the 14th the Uitlander Council passed resolutions urging that Her Majesty's Government should put an end to the state of suspense which was causing extreme distress at Johannesburg, and presented them to Mr. Greene through a deputation. On the 15th Mr. Morley and Mr. Courtney held a great meeting at Manchester protesting against a war with the Transvaal. On the 16th a riot took place at Johannesburg on the occasion of a labour meeting which an agitator called Bain was endeavouring to get up in opposition to the Uitlander meetings. On the same day the small party among the Transvaal burghers who still hoped for peace sent a deputation of three members of the Volksraad to President Steyn. Mr. Smuts endeavoured to forestall them by telegraph:—

"Some Volksraad members who are in favour of giving in at any price are going to Bloemfontein to try and win over your Honour. They only represent themselves and certain speculators. . . . Kruger regards them as agitators as they are opposed to resolution of Volksraad and Government."

On the 18th Mr. Hofmeyr sent an imploring telegram to President Kruger: "May you be given wisdom to select the right way and strength to pursue it," and followed it on the 19th by another insisting that Kruger should consent to the making public of the appeal of the Afrikander members sent on August 11. On the same day the Lancashire Regiment was sent up from Cape Town to guard Kimberley and the important bridge at Orange River. Sir A. Milner took the opportunity to send a telegram to President Steyn explaining that the movement was in no way directed against the Free State, and expressing the hope that in case of war with the Transvaal the Free State would maintain its neutrality, which would be most strictly respected by Her Majesty's Government. The President replied that he noticed with apprehension and regret the despatch of troops, which would be considered as a menace by his burghers and create a strong feeling of unrest. If unwished-for developments resulted from that, the responsibility would not rest with the Free State. Still it seemed that Mr. Steyn was wavering a little, and Sir Alfred resolved to do everything in his power to prevent the Free State throwing in its lot with the Transvaal. Almost simultaneously with Sir Alfred's telegram President Steyn got a missive from Pretoria: "I regret you reproach me *re* dynamite, upon which I think you are quite wrong." On the 20th Sir W. Harcourt, addressing his constituents at New Tredegar, protested violently against the whole policy of the Government, which he declared wished to force on a war over an ambiguous suzerainty. On the 21st President Steyn read out to the Free State Volksraad a speech in which he gave the now official version of the August negotiations: the offer induced by Mr. Greene and then made a pretext for further demands, Mr. Chamberlain's refusal to carry out his own invitation for a joint inquiry, etc. On the following day, no doubt by pre-arrangement, appeared Mr. Smuts' Greenbook. On the 21st the Cape Ministry sent a message through Sir A. Milner begging Her Majesty's Government to believe that their best efforts had been spent in the cause of peace, and to weigh well their earnest conviction that the situation was one for showing a spirit

of magnanimous compromise. The only hope of averting the calamity of a perhaps prolonged struggle would be to show a large measure of consideration, which could only strengthen the foundations of the Empire in South Africa. Mr. Chamberlain replied on the 25th that the Government had shown and would continue to show every consideration for the Transvaal, which could still secure peace without any sacrifice of independence. On the 22nd Mr. Reitz handed in to Mr. Greene a long criticism of Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of July 27, mainly to the effect that the non-intervention of Her Majesty's Government on the occasion of the alteration of the franchise in previous years debarred it from raising any claim to do so now. Perhaps the most interesting feature in the despatch is an incidental description of the Imperial Government as "a friendly Power, which, like this Republic, has great interests in South Africa." The Transvaal claimed not only to be absolutely independent of the British Empire, but to stand upon an equality with it.

The Cabinet meeting and the despatch of September 22.

On the same day, the 22nd, the Cabinet met again. There could be no doubt now what the issue would be, though a few moves had still to be played before the final step could be taken on one side or the other. In their despatch * of the 22nd the Government once more set forth their policy during the negotiations. That policy of friendly suggestion had now finally failed. To quote the concluding passage of the despatch:—

"The refusal of the Government of the South African Republic to entertain the offer thus made, coming as it does at the end of nearly four months of protracted negotiations, themselves the climax of an agitation extending over a period of more than five years, makes it useless to further pursue a discussion on the lines hitherto followed, and Her Majesty's Government are now compelled to consider the situation afresh, and to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement of the issues which have been created in South Africa by the policy constantly followed for many years by the Government of the South African Republic. They will communicate to you the result of their deliberations in a later despatch."

* C. 9530, p. 16.

Together with this despatch Mr. Chamberlain sent another despatch, protesting strongly against the charges of bad faith laid against Mr. Greene.*

The Cabinet decide to wait, mainly for military reasons.

Having sent its despatch, the Cabinet determined to wait some time before presenting its own proposals for a settlement. It was just possible, even now, that Kruger might come to terms suddenly, and offer unconditionally the terms of the Bloemfontein compromise, an offer which there is no reason to doubt the British Government would, up to the very last moment, have accepted. But a still more important reason for delay was that there were no troops in South Africa capable of coping with the Boer forces, underestimated as they were by the military authorities. The Indian contingent, nearly six thousand strong, was on its way, but would not reach Natal till early in October, and even that would only raise the force in South Africa to a total barely adequate for defence. The army corps which it was now decided to mobilize would not be landed at Cape Town for a fortnight after that. And till it was landed it would be no use delivering an ultimatum. What the actual proposals would have been, it is impossible to tell. The Cabinet themselves had not come to any decision when the war broke out. One can only hazard the guess that the proposals would have involved a complete revision of the franchise legislation of the Transvaal, guarantees to secure the independence of the High Court of Justice, demolition of the forts, and a new Convention embodying these guarantees, definitely asserting the subordinate status of the Republic, and imposing a stricter control upon, if not directly doing away with, Transvaal foreign relations.

Kruger resolves to fight. The argument for taking the aggressive. The Young Afrikanders.

The British despatch was presented in Pretoria on the 25th. On the same day Kruger learnt that the British force in Ladysmith under Sir W. Penn Symons had moved up to Dundee, and that the great peace meeting which was to have been held in Trafalgar Square on the 24th had proved a complete failure. There could be no doubt now that the British Government and people were really in earnest, and were determined to insist on a settlement satisfactory to

* C. 9530, p. 17.

themselves. The only alternatives open to Kruger were to surrender completely or to go to war. Whether he for a moment contemplated the former alternative, it is hard to say. What is certain is that the temper to which his burghers had been worked up was now such that surrender had become an impossibility. The only question was whether it would be better to take up a purely defensive attitude and wait for the British ultimatum and a subsequent invasion of the Transvaal, or to strike promptly, while the British force in South Africa was still weak and could easily be crushed. The Young Afrikander party was all for the latter plan. They calculated, not altogether unreasonably, that the British forces actually in South Africa would be a mere mouthful for the invading commandos of the two Republics. With all Natal down to Durban, and all Cape Colony down to the Hex River Pass in their hands, with 40,000 Colonial Afrikanders at their side, they would hold a position from which it was doubtful whether Great Britain could ever dislodge them. The war might thus, at a single stroke, bring about what otherwise might have taken a generation to attain to—the final expulsion of the British power from South Africa. In Europe they would lose but little by taking the offensive. The sympathy of the European Powers would manifest itself in the form of active intervention only if their own success was sufficiently marked to render such intervention an easy and profitable business. The effect on British public opinion they did not consider. They were too sanguine, too confident of success, to contemplate the possibility of failure, and only in the case of failure could the judgment of the British people on their conduct come into consideration. There was good precedent, too, for taking the aggressive. The war of 1881 had been, from the military point of view, a war of aggression. The British had suddenly been surprised and attacked on all sides, Natal had been invaded, and by the time a large expedition had reached the country the situation had changed so much for the worse that the British Government had surrendered. These were the arguments that the Young Afrikanders repeated day after day in the Club, in the Volksraad, on the President's

H. D. WOLMARANS. F. W. REITZ. SCHALK W. BURGER. J. H. M. KOCK.

GENERAL P. JOUBERT. PRESIDENT KRUGER. GENERAL P. A. CRONJE.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1899.

Photo by Barnett, Johannesburg.

stoep. And Kruger, after a little hesitation, threw in his lot, heart and soul, with the advocates of immediate action, and thus carried most of the Volksraad with him. There were only a very few who, like General Joubert, up to the last moment urged the political and moral advantages of remaining on the defensive.

Attitude of the Free State. Need for immediate action.

The only doubt about the policy of attack was whether it would meet with the approval of the Free State, which might possibly consider itself not bound by its treaty obligations to take part in a war of aggression. The fear was ungrounded. The steady agitation carried on in the Free State ever since the Raid had done its work, and the Transvaal misrepresentation of the August negotiations, as expounded by President Steyn on the 21st, had helped to raise nationalist frenzy to its highest pitch. From the 21st to the 27th the Free State Volksraad continued to sit in secret session. A large majority were for war, and most even of the minority believed that they were absolutely bound to support the Transvaal by the treaty of 1897. It is true that President Steyn in a hazy inconsequent fashion still talked of the possibility of peace, but Kruger knew quite well that this meant nothing and that Steyn would, in the end, follow blindly whatever course he decided to pursue. And the course he now decided on was immediate action. It was calculated that the Indian contingent would not reach Durban before the second week in October. It was therefore necessary to overwhelm the British force already in Natal, occupy Pietermaritzburg, and if possible Durban also, before that date. The burghers in both Republics had for months past been in readiness to take the field at a moment's notice—a certain number had already been watching the borders since the end of August. The actual mobilization on the Natal frontier of a force of 20,000 men would only be a matter of four or five days. But even that would only leave a week or ten days before the arrival of the Indian reinforcements. It was therefore absolutely essential to begin at once.

The original ultimatum, September 26

Before declaring war it would be necessary to send an ultimatum. An ultimatum was accordingly drawn up. It differed in form considerably from the one which was

actually delivered. The following was the substance of the draft:—

"Sir,—In the name of the Government of the South African Republic I have the honour to bring to your information that this Government, with an eye to the breaking off of friendly relations by Her Majesty's Government, as shown by the constant bringing up of troops to the borders * of this Republic, and the sending of war reinforcements from all parts of the British Empire, herewith informs you that unless they receive within forty-eight hours an assurance (1) that the troops on the borders of this Republic shall be instantly withdrawn; (2) that all reinforcements which have arrived in South Africa since June 1, 1899, shall be removed within a reasonable time; (3) that Her Majesty's troops which are now on the high seas shall not be landed in any port of South Africa—my Government will consider such action of Her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war, and will not hold itself responsible for the consequences thereof."

The draft ultimatum modified by Mr. Fischer.

A briefer or more arrogant ultimatum has rarely been penned in the course of history. One almost feels tempted to regret the loss of the dramatic effect which would have been produced by its presentation at the end of September, at a time when a great number of people, even among those who, like Mr. Rhodes, knew South Africa best, believed that Kruger would still "climb down." On September 26 Kruger telegraphed the draft to Bloemfontein for comment and approval. The substance was approved of, but the form, like that of so many other despatches drafted by Mr. Reitz, underwent considerable modification in the skilled hands of Mr. Fischer, who disliked crudities of expression, and wished to make the ultimatum include some more elaborate manifesto justifying the Transvaal policy. It was expanded to nearly four times its original length, so as to contain a complete summary of the negotiations and an elaborate argument to show that the conduct of the British Government had been

* The British troops on or near the borders of the Transvaal at that moment were a small force of 600–700 men under Colonel Baden-Powell at Ramathlabama, near Mafeking, and the force of about 4000 men under Sir W. Penn Symons at Dundee, some fifty miles from Laing's Nek.

a direct breach of the London Convention. The amended ultimatum as finally settled in its main features on or about the 27th ran as follows:—

"Sir,—The Government of the South African Republic feels itself compelled to refer the Government of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland once more to the Convention of London, 1884, concluded between this Republic and the United Kingdom and which in its XIVth Article secures certain specified rights to the white population of this Republic, namely that "All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (*a*) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject, in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic." This Government wishes further to observe that the above are the only rights which Her Majesty's Government have reserved in the above Convention with regard to the Uitlander population of this Republic, and that the violation only of those rights could give that Government a right to diplomatic representations or intervention, while, moreover, the regulation of all other questions affecting the position or the rights of the Uitlander population under the above-mentioned Convention is handed over to the Government and the representatives of the people of the South African Republic. Amongst the questions the regulation of which falls exclusively within the competence of the Government and of the Volksraad are included those of the franchise and representation of the people in this Republic, and although thus the exclusive right of this Government and of the Volksraad for the regulation of that franchise and representation is indisputable, yet this Government has found occasion to discuss in a friendly fashion the franchise and the representation of the people with Her Majesty's Government, without, however, recognizing any right thereto on the part of Her Majesty's Government. This Government has also, by the formulation of the now existing Franchise Law and the Resolution with regard to representation,

The Ultimatum.

The Ultimatum.

constantly held these friendly discussions before its eyes. On the part of Her Majesty's Government, however, the friendly nature of these discussions has assumed a more and more threatening tone, and the minds of the people in this Republic and in the whole of South Africa have been excited and a condition of extreme tension has been created, while Her Majesty's Government could no longer agree to the legislation respecting franchise and the Resolution respecting representation in this Republic, and finally, by your note of 25th September, 1899, broke off all friendly correspondence on the subject, and intimated that they must now proceed to formulate their own proposals for a final settlement, and this Government can only see in the above intimation from Her Majesty's Government a new violation of the Convention of London, 1884, which does not reserve to Her Majesty's Government the right to a unilateral settlement of a question which is exclusively a domestic one for this Government and has already been regulated by it.

On account of the strained situation and the consequent serious loss in and interruption of trade in general which the correspondence respecting the franchise and representation in this Republic carried in its train, Her Majesty's Government have recently pressed for an early settlement and finally pressed, by your intervention, for an answer within forty-eight hours (subsequently somewhat modified) to your note of the 12th September, replied to by the note of this Government of the 15th September, and your note of the 25th September, 1899, and thereafter further friendly negotiations broke off and this Government received the intimation that the proposal for a final settlement would shortly be made, but although this promise was once more repeated no proposal has up to now reached this Government. Even while friendly correspondence was still going on an increase of troops on a large scale was introduced by Her Majesty's Government and stationed in the neighbourhood of the borders of this Republic. Having regard to occurrences in the history of this Republic which it is unnecessary here to call to mind, this Government felt obliged to regard this military force in the neighbourhood of its borders as a threat against the independence of the South African Republic, since it was aware of no circumstances which could justify the presence of such military force in South Africa and in the neighbourhood of its borders. In answer to an enquiry with respect thereto, addressed to His Excellency the High Com-

missioner, this Government received, to its great astonishment, in answer, a veiled insinuation that from the side of the Republic an attack was being made on Her Majesty's Colonies and at the same time a mysterious reference to possibilities whereby it was strengthened in its suspicion that the independence of this Republic was being threatened. As a defensive measure it was therefore obliged to send a portion of the Burghers of this Republic in order to offer the requisite resistance to similar possibilities. Her Majesty's unlawful intervention in the internal affairs of this Republic in conflict with the Convention of London, 1884, caused by the extraordinary strengthening of troops in the neighbourhood of the borders of this Republic, has thus caused an intolerable condition of things to arise whereto this Government feels itself obliged, in the interest not only of this Republic but also of all South Africa, to make an end as soon as possible, and feels itself called upon and obliged to press earnestly and with emphasis for an immediate termination of this state of things and to request Her Majesty's Government to give it the assurance

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(*a*) That all points of mutual difference shall be regulated by the friendly course of arbitration or by whatever amicable way may be agreed upon by this Government with Her Majesty's Government.

(*b*) That the troops on the borders of this Republic shall be instantly withdrawn.

(*c*) That all reinforcements of troops which have arrived in South Africa since the 1st June, 1899, shall be removed from South Africa within a reasonable time, to be agreed upon with this Government, and with a mutual assurance and guarantee on the part of this Government that no attack upon or hostilities against any portion of the possessions of the British Government shall be made by the Republic during further negotiations within a period of time to be subsequently agreed upon between the Governments, and this Government will, on compliance therewith, be prepared to withdraw the armed Burghers of this Republic from the borders.

(*d*) That Her Majesty's troops which are now on the high seas shall not be landed in any port of South Africa.

This Government must press for an immediate and affirmative answer to these four questions, and earnestly requests Her

Majesty's Government to return such an answer before or upon ——, not later than ——,* and it desires further to add that in the event of unexpectedly no satisfactory answer being received by it within that interval it will with great regret be compelled to regard the action of Her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war, and will not hold itself responsible for the consequences thereof, and that in the event of any further movements of troops taking place within the above-mentioned time in the nearer directions of our borders this Government will be compelled to regard that also as a formal declaration of war.

Character of the ultimatum.

The Transvaal ultimatum has sometimes been represented as an act of despair provoked by the steady refusal of the British Government to formulate their demands while they were assembling a large force to crush the Boers. Such a view might have been reasonable if the ultimatum had only been thought of just before its delivery. It is not compatible with the fact that the ultimatum was drafted within a few hours of the receipt of the British despatch, and only held over for reasons that had nothing to do with a desire to preserve peace. On the other hand there is no reason for regarding the ultimatum as a heinous offence which should deprive the Boers of all the sympathy they might otherwise have deserved. From the point of view of Boer policy, it was a perfectly justifiable step prompted by the military necessities of the situation. That it alienated many sympathizers in England was due to the fact that those sympathizers had never before understood either the aims or the character of Transvaal policy.

Kruger and Steyn.

All that remained now was to have the burghers at the front and ready to cross the moment the ultimatum expired. On the 27th Kruger telegraphed to Steyn:—

"English troops already at Dundee and Biggarsberg, and will probably take up all the best positions unless we act at once. Executive Council unanimous that commando order should be issued to-day. We beg you will also call out your burghers. As war is unavoidable we must act at once, and strongly. The

* The dates actually inserted afterwards were "Wednesday the 11th October 1899" and "5 o'clock P.M."

longer we wait the more innocent blood will be shed through our delay. We don't intend to have Chamberlain's note,* with your amendments *re* Convention, telegraphed to you till burghers are at or near borders, and till you have been informed that the English Government has acted contrary to last part thereof. We are justified in crossing border. Plan of campaign follows."

A few hours later, the Executive having in the meantime issued the commando order, he telegraphed again :—

"Burghers will be in position in our territory near Laing's Nek on Friday† morning 5 A.M. All other burghers being called up to follow as soon as possible. Kock leaves with two cannons to-morrow evening, also big guns for Laing's Nek. Will Free State then also be in position? Volksraad meets seven this evening. Can you reply by then? Plan campaign follows."

Steyn's waverings.

President Steyn's reply was not very satisfactory. Weak creature that he was, he now began to waver and hesitate on the brink of a war which a show of firmness on his part could have averted, but which if begun should have been begun with decision and promptitude. On the 28th Kruger communicated to him a cable coming (or purporting to come) from Dr. Leyds, who had been informed on the 27th of the intended ultimatum, to the effect that the general opinion on the Continent was that the English were determined on war, and that the Transvaal ought to attack before the English were ready. The firm attitude of the Transvaal's reply of the 15th had had a good effect. On the same day Mr. Reitz also telegraphed to President Steyn that he hoped the Free State forces would be on the Natal border on the 29th, so as to be ready to cross simultaneously with the Transvaalers. On the 29th Kruger telegraphed again :—

"Our burghers going to hold positions on border to prevent enemy getting hold of them. You still seem to think of peace, but I consider it impossible.‡ I am strongly of opinion that your

* *I.e.*, the Ultimatum.

† September 29.

‡ On the 28th the writer asked President Kruger if there was still any hope of peace. "No," growled the old President; and then, after a little pause, as if thinking that he had said too much—"unless the British Government does something to make peace possible."

people ought also to go to border to take positions. You think Chamberlain is leading us into a trap, but if we wait longer our cause may be hopelessly lost and that would be our trap."

The final arrangements. Anecdote about Mr. Reitz.

Steyn's reply was apparently more satisfactory this time, for by the 30th the Executive at Pretoria were satisfied that everything was ripe for action. Mr. Reitz now asked Mr. Greene if he could communicate to him the decision of the British Cabinet by the following day. The reason for this step was that the Executive had now finally decided that unless the British demands arrived by Monday, October 2, the ultimatum should be presented on that day. The invasion of Natal should in any case take place if possible on Wednesday, October 4. The Young Afrikanders could hardly contain themselves for glee and excitement. They were going to "stagger humanity" by the boldness with which they would fling down the gauntlet to the great British Empire, by the rapidity with which they would sweep the British into the sea, and by the tenacity with which they would prevent the British ever recovering the foothold they had once lost. A short anecdote may perhaps give, almost more clearly than anything else, a picture of the levity with which the leading men of the Transvaal faced the terrible problem of war. On the afternoon of the 30th the writer was walking with Mr. Reitz towards his house at Sunnyside, a suburb of Pretoria, when the State Secretary suddenly turned round and said, "Have you read 'Treasure Island'?" "Yes." "Then you may remember the passage where they 'tip the black spot' to Long John Silver?" "Yes." "Well, I expect it will fall to my lot on Monday to 'tip the black spot' to Long John Greene." And hereupon the State Secretary cheerily detailed to his astounded listener the terms of the ultimatum, compliance with which might yet save the British Empire from war.

The Transvaal reply to the despatch of May 10. Sir A. Milner's criticism.

Before going on to the subsequent history of the ultimatum it is necessary to refer to some of the other events that took place before its delivery. On the 26th Mr. Reitz handed to Mr. Greene the Transvaal reply * to Mr. Chamber-

* Cd. 43, p. 73.

lain's despatch of May 10. In nine pages of Bluebook Mr. Reitz controverted the whole account of the Transvaal situation as presented by Mr. Chamberlain. No better short criticism of this reply could be given than was contained in Sir A. Milner's covering despatch of October 4:—

"The Goverment of the Republic discuss the various subjects dealt with by you, and in every case arrive at the conclusion that there is nothing in their proceedings to which objection can properly be taken. Their conclusions are so completely at variance with facts which are now of world-wide notoriety that I can only suppose that the note has really been written for consumption by those persons who, being unable or unwilling to investigate the facts for themselves, are content to rest their support of the South African Republic on the latter's presentation of its case. The general contention of the note is that the present position in South Africa is the work of a few agitators, whose principles and personality are alike insignificant, and whose success is due to the influence which they have been able to exercise on the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The truth or falsehood of this assertion has been put to the severest test. For weeks past the industrial life of Johannesburg has been paralyzed; large numbers of British subjects have been thrown out of employment, and reduced to a condition of destitution which has called for a great and organised effort of private charity; and they, with their wives and families, have been daily fleeing from the town under every condition of hardship and privation. Is it humanly conceivable that a great community, brought into this position by the unscrupulous tactics of a few agitators, should not have disowned and denounced in the most vigorous manner those who professed to speak on their behalf? Indeed, it would not have been surprising if a certain portion, under the pressure of suffering, had been tempted to dissociate themselves from a movement in which they had formerly participated, and with which they were still in secret sympathy. But, so far from this being the case, not a murmur has reached me; and no more striking proof could possibly be given both of the temper of the British population and of their deeply-rooted conviction that anything is preferable to a continuance of the conditions under which they have had to live."

The tone with which the reply referred to the "imaginary grievances of the so-called Uitlanders," to "lying criticism on imaginary cases of maladministration," was throughout arrogant, but perhaps the most striking sentence in it was one putting forward, in even stronger language than was contained in Mr. Reitz's despatch of the 22nd or in the ultimatum, the claim of the Republics to equality with the Paramount Power. In that sentence the Imperial Government was described as "another Power, which, along with the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, protects and looks after the great interests of South Africa."

President Steyn and Sir A. Milner.

On the 27th President Steyn communicated to Sir A. Milner the unanimous resolution of the Free State Volksraad that the Free State would fulfil its treaty obligations to the Transvaal whatever might happen. On the same day he telegraphed a long message to the High Commissioner to the effect that the Free State was still prepared to tender its services in the interest of peace, but felt itself hampered "now, as in the past," by a want of knowledge of the real extent of the demands of the British Government, and by the "enormous and ever increasing" military preparations of the latter. He trusted that, pending the delivery of their own further proposals, Her Majesty's Government would stop all movements of troops near the borders. It is hard to know exactly what purpose this telegram was meant to fulfil. President Steyn, who had already agreed to the ultimatum, could hardly have believed that he might avert war by informally asking the High Commissioner to stop all military movements. On the other hand it might be unfair to suggest that this attempt to open up informal negotiations was a mere ruse to cover the attack which was already planned. It is more probable that this telegram and the ones that followed were the devices of a weak man, drifting into war, but wishing in some way to salve his conscience by efforts for peace which he well knew could only be fruitless. It is likely too that President Steyn had some hopes that he might elicit the demands of the British Cabinet, and thus enable the Transvaal and Free State to

go to war on the plea that they were opposing impossible demands. Mr. Chamberlain replied on the 29th in a somewhat curt telegram, which Sir A. Milner, who felt bound to leave no possible approach to a peaceful solution untried, held over because he had reasons for believing that the Free State was still wavering a little.

The earnest entreaties of the Cape Ministry probably had something to do with Mr. Steyn's hesitations. On the 26th he received, almost simultaneously with the draft ultimatum, a brief telegram from Cape Town signed "Micaiah" which ran as follows: "Read chapter 22 first Book of Kings and accept friendly warning."* On the 28th Sir H. de Villiers again wrote to Mr. Fischer in the vain hope of inducing the Free State at least to listen to reason:— Sir H. de Villiers to Mr. Fischer, September 28.

"My dear Mr. Fischer,—Before it is too late, I venture to make a final appeal to you, and, through you, to others in the Orange Free State who have any influence with President Kruger and his Raad. I do not, of course, know what the contents of the next British despatch will be, but if they be such as can be accepted without actual dishonour, I hope they will be accepted. The South African Republic cannot go to war if your Government should consider the despatch one which ought not to be rejected. Supposing a war does take place, is there any chance of the Transvaal obtaining better terms when the war is over? That question should be most seriously considered by all friends of the South African Republic. The whole might of Great Britain will be brought into play, and the war will not cease until the Transvaal is entirely subjugated. What will the position of the Republics then be? Judging from the forecasts given of the intended despatch, it will, at all events, formulate all the British demands. If that be so, there will not be the danger of further demands being sprung upon the South African Republic. It will surely be for the interest of South Africa that a full and final settlement should now be arrived at.

* The reference is to the story of Jehoshaphat and the prophet Micaiah. (Cf. 1 Kings 22, v. 15.) "And the King said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? . . . . And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd."

"What I feel in the matter is that, however badly the Transvaal may have been treated from a diplomatic point of view, there is at bottom good ground for the irritation against its Government. Throughout the negotiations they have always been wriggling to prevent a clear and precise decision, and have subsequently regretted that they did not accept proposals after they were withdrawn. The very best friends of the Transvaal feel that the Bill providing for the seven years' franchise is not a fair or workable measure. It is this manœuvring to escape an unpleasant decision which has more than anything else driven the British Government into its present attitude. My fear is that the fresh proposals will be summarily rejected, but that the day will come when everybody who has had any hand in such rejection will bitterly regret his action. I am assuming, of course, that the proposals are such as can be accepted without dishonour. The manner in which the latest proposals were rejected does not give one much ground for hope. Take such a reasonable proposal as that members should be allowed to address the Volksraad in the English language. Surely it ought not to have been rejected in such a summary, I might almost say contemptuous, manner.

"I confess I look with horror on a war to be fought by Afrikanders to bolster up President Kruger's *régime*. I could understand a war in defence of the South African Republic after it has made reasonable concessions to the demands of the newcomers, and after it has displayed the same desire to secure good government as is seen in the Orange Free State; but of such a desire I have not seen the faintest trace. I am afraid that neither Reitz nor Smuts is the man for the present crisis. I have carefully read the latest correspondence, and I am by no means satisfied that the British Resident was guilty of a breach of faith. The utmost I would say is that there was a misunderstanding. The despatch of the 21st August seems to me to have been wholly unnecessary, unless something happened between the 19th and 21st which led the Transvaal Government to think they had yielded too much. I have heard it said that between those dates a cablegram from Dr. Leyds gave hopes of European intervention, and the return of Wolmarans from the Orange Free State gave hope of assistance from that quarter; but that may be mere rumour.

"You will excuse my troubling you with this incoherent and

hastily-written letter. It is only my anxious desire to preserve the peace of South Africa and save the Republics from destruction that has induced me to write it. Believe me, &c.,

"J. H. DE VILLIERS."

Dr. Clark, M.P., to President Kruger.

It is not pleasant to compare with this earnest appeal from a true friend of the two misguided Republics a letter sent on the same day by a member of the Imperial Parliament—Dr. G. B. Clark. Where the Afrikander statesman urges the Transvaal to accept the British terms, the English fanatic writes: "I hear the conditions are such as to be tantamount to a declaration of war, and I have no doubt that when the despatch is published your people will see that war is inevitable." Where Sir H. de Villiers talks of his horror at the thought of a war to bolster up Krugerism, Dr. Clark complacently discusses the advantages and disadvantages of seizing the passes. Where Sir H. de Villiers protests against unfair misrepresentation of the British Government, Dr. Clark says, "You will be maligned and misrepresented whatever you do." Quite apart from the mischievous effect of such utterances in the Transvaal, nothing has contributed more to destroy the influence of those Englishmen who have been genuinely convinced either from sentiment or policy that the attitude of the Government towards the Transvaal was a mistaken one, than the unpatriotic extravagances of the extreme Boer partizans.

Afrikander and Progressive members of Cape Parliament express their views to Mr. Chamberlain.

On the 28th the Afrikander members of both Houses of the Cape Parliament, fifty-eight in number, including the ministers, presented a petition to Sir A. Milner for transmission to the Queen. The petition expressed the earnest belief that the Transvaal was fully awakened to the wisdom and discretion of making liberal provisions for the representation of the Uitlanders, and urged Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Joint Commission. On the same day fifty-three Progressive members of Parliament presented a resolution strongly deprecating the attitude of the petitioners, and assuring Her Majesty's Government of their strongest support. To the fifty-eight Mr. Chamberlain replied that Her Majesty's Government, in dealing with the Transvaal,

had not been unmindful of the sympathies and interests of Her Majesty's subjects of Dutch descent. The main object of their policy had been to secure for the non-Dutch inhabitants of the Transvaal similar rights to those enjoyed by the Dutch in Cape Colony. The reasons for not now accepting the Joint Commission or the seven years' franchise had already been stated. To the fifty-three he briefly expressed the satisfaction of the Government for the assurance of their support.

The eve of war. The Uitlander exodus. Boer conduct.

In the Transvaal itself no one doubted the certainty of war. The commandos had been mobilized on the 27th, and for the next four days an incessant stream of trains carried the burghers down to the Natal frontier. On the 29th the Volksraad decided to give the full franchise to all who should volunteer to fight for the Republic—a measure specially devised to shelter Cape Afrikanders from what would otherwise be the consequences of rebellion. On the same day the railways were taken over by the State and all Natal traffic was stopped. The Law Courts were now suspended. Meanwhile the whole British population of both Republics had for weeks past been leaving their homes to take refuge in British territory. The open threats of the burghers and the attitude of the Governments made it certain that the lot of those who stayed behind would not be a pleasant one in the event of war. President Steyn had insisted that in the event of war British subjects would have to obey the commando orders and fight their own countrymen just as much as the burghers, and had replied to all protests by declaring that the Free State did not recognise the usages of International Law. In the Transvaal it was pretty generally known that the Government had determined as a measure of military precaution to expel the whole British Uitlander population, and the possibility of Johannesburg being destroyed was freely spoken of. During the last week of September and the first week of October there was a frantic rush for the trains to Natal, Cape Colony, and Delagoa Bay. It was a pitiable sight this wholesale terrified exodus of half the population of a country, and many were the sufferings undergone on their journey by the

unfortunate exiles huddled together for two or three days on end in open trucks. In some cases, as at Kroonstad on October 2, the refugees were hustled, knocked about and ill-treated by excited Boer crowds at the stations through which they passed. But these were exceptions. Taking into consideration the extreme bitterness of feeling, it cannot be said that, on the whole, the Boers behaved badly. There was, however, considerable ill-usage of Kaffirs making their way home from the mines. Many of these innocent victims of a political struggle in which they had no concern were grievously ill-treated on their way home, and most of them were relieved of their savings. The latter method was after October 2 also applied to the Uitlander refugees. On that and the succeeding days the Transvaal Government seized a large quantity of bar gold which was being exported out of the country. The measure was a not unjustifiable precaution, but there can be no justification for its extension to the searching of individual passengers and the confiscation of all their money with the exception of a small balance of £10 to £15. The wealthier portion of the Uitlanders had left weeks before, and the robbing of small shopkeepers and operatives of their hard-earned savings could bring no profit commensurate with the hardship inflicted.

The Transvaal Volksraads adjourn, October 2.

On the 2nd the Transvaal Volksraads adjourned. Many of the members had already left to take up their positions with their commandos. It was a striking occasion. For the first time, perhaps, the majority of those present realized the stupendous task they had undertaken in deciding to go to war with a great civilized Power. They spoke earnestly, with the deep feeling of men labouring under great excitement, and in the language that comes natural to those whose strongest emotions have ever been connected with their religious beliefs. The President declared that war was inevitable because their enemies did not want the Afrikanders to be a nation. But they would never give away that which the Lord had given them. The Lord would be with them, and would be the Final Arbitrator, and show up all the lying words about "equal rights." Let them read the 118th Psalm, verse 7, and pray to the Lord. Let them not

fear the bullets of the enemy. Who directed the shots but the Lord? Again, at a later stage in the debate, the President intervened to deliver a homily on the necessity of believing God's word. In the same strain Mr. Wolmarans declared that the Lord had used the English people to chastise them and bring them from their sins. Other members, perhaps, more nearly expressed the general sentiment of the younger burghers when they declared that Providence had now given them the longed-for opportunity to free the Afrikander nation.

President Steyn and Sir A. Milner.

On the same day Mr. Steyn communicated to Sir A. Milner the fact that his burghers had been called out on commando, and expressed his eagerness to see peace secured. Sir Alfred replied in a conciliatory tone, but pointed out that the position which the Transvaal forces were occupying seemed clearly to indicate an intention to invade British territory. In view of the President's repeated declarations, he felt confident that such an action could never have the support of the Free State. The President answered by expressing his belief that there was no intention on the part of the Transvaal to take the aggressive unless further forward movements of British troops took place, and again urging Sir Alfred to withdraw all British forces from near the Republican borders. President Steyn knew perfectly well that the Transvaal was determined on aggression, and was himself busily pushing forward preparations for attack; but it is not necessary to suppose that his telegrams were deliberately devised with the notion of lulling Sir Alfred into a false security. On the contrary, it is just possible that he cherished some faint, irrational hope that the British troops would be withdrawn, and certain that he wished to ease his own conscience before plunging into war. Sir Alfred, who knew his hesitations, replied by giving the reasons for the movement of troops and by again endeavouring to let the President see that he did not believe that the Free State would take part in any aggressive action. On the 4th Mr. Steyn telegraphed again, using expressions which, to Sir Alfred, seemed to indicate an intention of picking a quarrel. Nevertheless, Sir Alfred asked, and received, Mr. Chamberlain's permission to send a telegram

directly inviting proposals even at the eleventh hour. The words of this message are worth quoting :—

Sir A. Milner, at the eleventh hour, invites proposals.

"The question is whether the Burgher forces will invade British territory, thus closing the door to any possibility of a pacific solution. I cannot believe that the South African Republic will take such aggressive action, or that Your Honour would countenance such course, which there is nothing to justify. Prolonged negotiations have hitherto failed to bring about a satisfactory understanding, and no doubt such understanding is more difficult than ever to-day, after expulsion of British subjects with great loss and suffering, but till the threatened act of aggression is committed I shall not despair of peace, and *I feel sure that any reasonable proposal, from whatever quarter proceeding, would be favourably considered by Her Majesty's Government*, if it offered an immediate termination of present tension and a prospect of permanent tranquillity."

One may note that Sir Alfred did not suggest that the burghers should be recalled to their farms, which, from the merely dialectical point of view, would have been a sufficient retort to President Steyn. The fact is that, unlike President Steyn's messages, this was a genuine attempt to bring about a peaceful solution, and not a foolish and impossible demand wrapped round with a few pacific phrases. It was sent off on the 6th, although Sir Alfred had, at the moment of receiving Mr. Chamberlain's permission, received a further telegram from the President, in which he demanded, as an indispensable preliminary, to be decided upon within twenty-four hours, not only the withdrawal of British troops, but an assurance that no more would be sent, and those already on the water not landed. To this demand Sir Alfred answered, at Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion, that Her Majesty's Government would give an assurance not to invade Republican territory if President Steyn could get a similar assurance from the Transvaal, leaving each party to do what it liked in its own borders. This exchange of inconclusive telegrams continued for several days longer, President Steyn taking up a more and more aggressive attitude.

On the 7th the Transvaal Government issued a notice

Expulsion of British subjects. Parliament summoned and Reserves called out.

that all British subjects who had not left and who wished to continue staying in the Transvaal would have to get special permits, and it was generally understood that those permits would only be given as a matter of exceptional favour.* On the same day Royal Proclamations were issued in England summoning Parliament to meet for the 17th, and calling out a portion of the First Class Reserves. The offers of colonial contingents from almost all the self-governing colonies had already been accepted on the 3rd. The final preparations for the organization of a field force of 50,000 men for service in South Africa were now hurried on.

The delay of the ultimatum. Rumours of peace.

The reader may at this point begin to wonder what became of the ultimatum as finally framed on September 27, and destined to be delivered on October 2. On Sunday, October 1, Mr. Greene delivered a brief reply from Mr. Chamberlain that the despatch of Her Majesty's Government was not yet quite ready. But the expected ultimatum did not follow on the Monday. Vague rumours of the possibility of peace floated about Pretoria during the next few days. Members of the Government referred mysteriously to an impending visit by Mr. Schreiner and Mr. Hofmeyr, for whom rooms and a sumptuous dinner at the "Transvaal Hotel" were actually ordered on the 4th by someone professing to be a Government agent. That the Cape statesmen were doing their best to induce President Steyn, and, through him, President Kruger, to listen to reason is true enough. But after Kruger's last missive to Mr. Hofmeyr there could be no question of another visit to Pretoria. Nor were their efforts in any direct sense responsible for the delay in declaring war, though indirectly they contributed to that delay by increasing President Steyn's waverings and hesitations on the brink of war. President Steyn had absolutely committed himself to the Transvaal policy, but he did not face with any pleasure the prospect of taking the aggressive, and of breaking the many pledges he had given both in public and in private that he would never invade Cape Colony. His wavering had caused the mobilization of the Free State burghers to be put

* Even of those given the majority were subsequently revoked, some within a few days, others not for some months after.

off from September 27 to October 2. To this extent then the delay of the ultimatum may be considered as partly due to President Steyn's reluctance to force on the war. But the rest of the delay was due to causes belonging to a very different category.

The Boer mobilization. The unexpected delays.

The Transvaal forces had been called out on September 27 and responded to the call with the greatest enthusiasm. The burghers had been getting very weary of the interminable wranglings with the British Government, which they largely attributed to the President's excessive good-nature. They were glad that the Government had at last decided to settle the matter and to teach the "rooineks" how to behave. They expected to be out in the field for two or three months, shoot plenty of the redcoats, and then make peace, reserving for themselves Natal, which had been stolen from their grandfathers, giving the Free State Kimberley, which had been stolen scarcely a generation ago, and insisting on a promise that the wishes of their Afrikander brethren in Cape Colony should not be thwarted in the future by "jingo" High Commissioners. The possibility of defeat never seriously entered the calculations of the Government; still less did it affect the eagerness of the burghers. The mobilization was almost instantaneous. By the 30th fully 10,000 men were assembled at Sandspruit, ten miles from Laing's Nek, and on other points along the eastern border of Natal. But on that and the next few days an alarming discovery was made. The men had been mobilized, even more rapidly than had been expected. But that was all. There was no proper advanced depôt for stores or ammunition; there were not nearly enough transport wagons; a hundred other necessary details wanted completing before the army could move. The railway line was hopelessly blocked with the empty trains that had carried the burghers to the front. When General Joubert went down to Sandspruit on October 2 he found the commandos scattered about the "veld" without tents, without food, without forage, short of ammunition, short of blankets, short of mackintoshes. It required more than a week of constant work—creating a depôt at Sandspruit and equipping the different commandos—before General Joubert's main Natal

army was ready to advance. That the work was done even in that time reflects considerable credit on the Boer military system, on General Joubert, and on the Netherlands Railway. With the Free Staters matters were even worse. They started later, they pushed their preparations less vigorously, as men do who are fighting less in their own interest than under treaty obligation; they had fewer railway facilities. In fact the Free State forces on the Natal side were not ready for effective action for at least a fortnight after mobilization, while the most exposed point of the British defence, the region south of the Orange River, was not touched for nearly a month.

The situation saved. The Boers no longer able to go back to the defensive. The ultimatum presented, October 9.

During all these days the Executive at Pretoria were waiting with feverish anxiety, unable either to hurry on their preparations or to delay the approach and disembarkation of the Indian contingent. Thanks to the admirable organization of the Indian army and of the sea transport which had been provided for the purpose, the bulk of the contingent had been landed at Durban by the 8th and was sent up to Ladysmith as fast as it could be entrained. It may fairly be said that the Boer miscalculations as to their power of mobilizing rapidly on the one hand, and, on the other, the promptitude with which the military authorities in India despatched their contingent, were the two things which saved, not merely Natal, but the whole South African situation. By the 9th more than half the military advantages which justified the sudden invasion of Natal had been lost to the Boers, while all the political disadvantages remained. But it was no longer possible to go back upon the fateful step that had been taken. A rearrangement of the plan of campaign would have been difficult and was probably never thought of. A return to a defensive political attitude may have been thought of, but was no longer possible. The burghers were in the field, and were now truly, as Kruger had said on a different issue at Bloemfontein, the sovereign power in the State. To any one who, like the present writer, was in the field with the Boers during those last days of suspense, it must have been evident that no power on earth could any longer have

BOER GENERALS IN THE WAR OF 1881.

NERAL FRANS JOUBERT.
MMANDANT HANS BOTHA.
ENERAL H. SCHOEMAN.

GENERAL P. A. CRONJE.
GENERAL NIKOLOS J. SMIT.
COMMANDANT HANS ERASMUS.

COMMANDANT J. H. M. KO
GENERAL J. P STEYN.
COMMANDANT J. FOURI

From Photo by Budrick, Cape Town.

averted war. If the Government had delayed many days longer, the burghers, who were already beginning to grumble loudly against General Joubert's inaction, would have elected new generals of their own, and crossed the border without waiting for further formalities. This the Government fully realized. Their hands were forced, and they now, reluctantly perhaps, played the trump card which they had deferred too long and which could no longer win. On the afternoon of Monday, October 9, the Transvaal ultimatum was at last formally handed in to the British Agent. The reply was to be given not later than five o'clock on Wednesday afternoon.

The British reply. Attitude of President Steyn.

To the ultimatum there could be only one answer. Mr. Greene was instructed to inform the Government of the South African Republic that the conditions demanded by it were such as Her Majesty's Government deemed it impossible to discuss, and to ask for his passports. To the British Agent, at least, worn almost to a shadow by the ceaseless anxiety of the past two months, the ultimatum must have come as a relief. The Transvaal Government, with whom he had always striven to maintain friendly personal relations, made every arrangement necessary for the comfort of his departure on the 12th. With him departed the last remnants of the exiled British population of the Transvaal. For these refugees, of whom there were now over 45,000, a fund was opened at the Mansion House. On the 11th Sir A. Milner telegraphed to President Steyn to inquire whether the Transvaal ultimatum had his concurrence and support. President Steyn, whose burghers had already committed the first act of war that afternoon by seizing a train belonging to the Natal Government Railways on the Free State border, replied as follows :—*

"I have the honour to acknowledge Your Excellency's telegrams of this evening. The high-handed and unjustifiable policy and conduct of Her Majesty's Government in interfering in and dictating in the purely internal affairs of South African Republic, constituting a flagrant breach of the Convention of London, 1884, accompanied at first by preparations, and latterly followed by active commencement of hostilities against that Republic, which

* C. 9530, p. 69.

no friendly and well-intentioned efforts on our part could induce Her Majesty's Government to abandon, constitute such an undoubted and unjust attack on the independence of the South African Republic that no other course is left to this State than honourably to abide by its Conventional Agreements entered into with that Republic."

A few hours before Mr. Schreiner had telegraphed to President Steyn to remind him of his previous assurances that Cape Colony would not be invaded from the Free State. Mr. Steyn replied that he could only give such an assurance if the Cape Ministry guaranteed that no troops should be allowed to go through Cape Colony, a guarantee which was obviously impossible.

The first shot fired, October 12.

On the 12th the first shot of the war was fired, and the Boers gained their first success at Kraaipan, forty miles south of Mafeking, by capturing an armoured train with two 7-pounders and ammunition, intended for Colonel Baden-Powell.

President Steyn's manifesto.

On the outbreak of the war President Steyn issued a manifesto to his burghers, the character of which is sufficiently indicated by the following sentences :—*

"An occasion which we would gladly have avoided, a time when we as a people are compelled to defend ourselves, with weapons, against injustice and a disgraceful use of force, has at length arrived, when our sister Republic on the North of the Vaal River is about to be attacked by an unscrupulous enemy, who has for several years already prepared himself, and has looked for a pretext for the violence of which he now makes himself guilty, the purpose whereof is to annihilate the Afrikander people. . . . We declare solemnly, and as if in the presence of the Almighty, that we are compelled to take this course through the injustice done to our kith and kin, being well aware that when their independence ceases our own existence as an independent nation will be meaningless, and that their fate, if they have to bow beneath an overwhelming Power, will also overtake us at no distant date. Solemn obligations have not protected our sister Republic against annexation, against conspiracy, against laying claim to a Suzerainty that

* *See* Cd.— 43, p. 139.

is non-existent, against continual oppression and interference, and now against a fresh attack which has no other object than her destruction. Our own unfortunate experiences in the past have made it also sufficiently clear to us that one can place no reliance on the most solemn promises and obligations of Great Britain when she has an Administration at the helm which is prepared to tread under foot treaties, and to find hypocritical pretexts for every breach of good faith committed by her. . . . For many years past British troops have been placed in great numbers on the borders of our sister Republic in order to compel it by terrorism to comply with claims which should be made on the same, and to excite a treasonable rising, and the crafty plans of those whose love of gold is the motive power of their shameful undertakings. These plans have now reached their zenith in the public violations to which the present British Government has now proceeded. While we candidly acknowledge the honourable character of thousands of Englishmen who abhor such deeds of robbery and wrong, we cannot do otherwise than execrate the shameless breach of treaties, the hypocritical pretexts for contraventions of law, the violations of international law and justice, and the numerous wrongful deeds of the British statesmen who now threaten the South African Republic with war. On their heads be the liability for bloodshed, and may a righteous Providence bring retribution on such as deserve it.

"Burghers of the Orange Free State, stand up as one man against the oppressor and the violator of right.

"In carrying on the conflict which we are now compelled to undertake, let the deeds of none of you be such as to disgrace a Christian and a burgher and the Free State. Let us look forward with confidence to a successful issue of the struggle, trusting to that Higher Power without Whose assistance human weapons avail nothing. To the God of our fathers we humbly commend the justice of our cause. May He defend the right and may He bless our weapons! Under His banner we proceed to battle for freedom and for fatherland."

Mr. Reitz's manifesto.

Mr. Reitz issued a similar manifesto,* appealing to the Free State and to all Afrikanders to stand shoulder to shoulder against "the murderers, the peace and treaty-breakers," who were attacking them, who had continually

* Cd.—43, p. 190.

attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of their country, who had

"entrapped us in a mean and despicable manner in making certain proposals which they would be willing to consider on their merits, even while they were ready, as soon as these proposals were formulated, to reject them as an insult to the British nation. . . . From Slagter's Nek to Laing's Nek, from the Pretoria Convention to the Bloemfontein Conference, they have ever been the treaty-breakers and robbers. The diamond fields of Kimberley and the beautiful land of Natal were robbed from us, and now they want the goldfields of the Witwatersrand. . . . Brother Afrikanders! The day is at hand on which great deeds are expected of us! War has broken out! What is it to be? A wasted and enslaved South Africa or—a Free, United South Africa?"

These manifestoes, and many others of the same type, such, for instance, as the notorious appeal to Afrikanders to rise against the British yoke, which had been written by Mr. Ben Viljoen, a member of the Second Volksraad, and circulated in Cape Colony for months past, all struck the same note. The war was to be one for the supremacy of Afrikanderdom, and the expulsion of the British power from South Africa.

Aggressive political character of the war. Was it inevitable?

It has sometimes been asserted that the British Government gratuitously provoked war over a petty detail of the franchise scheme, or over the meaning of an obscure word, and then made the war an excuse for annexing territory which it had long been coveting. Nothing can be farther from the truth. What is true is that the Transvaal went to war sooner than concede a small instalment of reform, and had no sooner declared war than it openly avowed that the object of that war was—not the maintenance of the Transvaal franchise in its existing form, but the destruction of the British power in South Africa. It was not merely in its strategy, but in its whole political objects, that the war begun by the Transvaal was a war of aggression. In the eyes of militant Afrikanderdom it was not a war fought about some specific dispute; it was *the* war—the great war against the

national enemy to which they had steadily looked forward. It is necessary to remember, in considering the readiness of the Boers to plunge into war over what may seem so small a matter, that they believed that, sooner or later, war was inevitable, and that therefore it was not simply a question of war or peace, but of war in 1899, with their preparations still somewhat incomplete, or war a few years later, when the State might be hampered by the presence of some thousands of new burghers, lukewarm in the nationalist cause. The question has often been asked whether the war was inevitable. The event has shown that it certainly was inevitable if the Imperial Government was determined to secure the principle of equal citizenship in the Transvaal. But it would have been no less inevitable within a few years, even if there had been no intervention on behalf of the Uitlanders—unless the Imperial Government had been content gradually to resign to the Transvaal its position as the leading Power in South Africa. The formal incorporation of Swaziland, federation with the Free State, accompanied by a repudiation of Article IV. of the London Convention, a treaty of alliance with some European Power, the forcible suppression of Uitlander discontent—these are but a few of the points on each of which the British Government would, within a few years, have found itself obliged either to give way or to face the alternative of war with the steadily growing Boer forces. Sir A. Milner clearly realized that the only hope of averting the catastrophe lay in inducing the Transvaal to divest itself of its character as a purely nationalist State, and in bringing about a change in its whole policy by the introduction into its councils of a stable and progressive element bound by ties of natural affection to the British Empire. The course of the negotiations showed that the task was hopeless. In this context one may well quote Mr. Chamberlain's own words as spoken in the House of Commons on October 19:—

Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons, October 19.

"Having most carefully considered all the circumstances in the light of the most recent events—in the light of the ultimatum and in the light of recent speeches of President Kruger and others—I have now come to the conclusion that war was

always inevitable. . . . From the first day I came into office I hoped for peace, I strove for peace. At that time and at an earlier period, down even to the most recent period, I have believed in peace. . . . We are going to war in defence of principles—the principles upon which this Empire has been founded, and upon which alone it can exist. . . . The first principle is this—if we are to maintain our existence as a great power in South Africa, we are bound to show that we are both willing and able to protect British subjects everywhere when they are made to suffer from oppression and injustice. . . . The second principle is that in the interests of South Africa, and in the interests of the British Empire, Great Britain must remain the paramount Power in South Africa. These are the two principles, and we are at war now because the oligarchy at Pretoria, aided and abetted by President Steyn and advisers outside the Republic, has persistently pursued, from the very day of the signing of the Convention of 1881 down to now, a policy which tended to the evasion of its obligations; a policy by which it has broken its promises; by which it has placed, gradually, but surely, British subjects in the Transvaal in a position of distinct inferiority; by which it has conspired against and undermined the suzerainty, the paramountcy which belongs to Great Britain."

The tone of the British despatches.

There are many former sympathizers with the Boers who have since become convinced both of the misgovernment of the Transvaal and of the dangerous character of its ambitions, but who yet persist, somewhat illogically, in declaring that a solution might have been arrived at but for the tone in which the negotiations were carried on by Mr. Chamberlain and Sir A. Milner. The charge generally is that their despatches were irritating and provocative in tone, exasperating the feelings of the Boers and abandoning the hopes of agreement for the sake of dialectical triumphs. It is difficult to believe that those who put forward this view have ever carefully studied the despatches and compared them with the Transvaal despatches or the actions of the Transvaal Government to which they referred. It is true that both Mr. Chamberlain and Sir A. Milner have the dangerous gift of epigram. Either of them can coin an incisive phrase, which in reality contains little more than

has previously been stated and accepted, but which catches the ear, passes from mouth to mouth, and is worn threadbare by incessant repetition. Phrases like "helots," "a squeezed sponge," or "the sands are running out," must be read in their context to convey any fair idea of their meaning, and when so read will be seen to contain nothing more than has previously been argued in language of studious moderation. It is the same with the speeches. Many of them contained serious warnings to the Transvaal Government, others were intended to justify the policy of the Cabinet, or to concentrate public attention on the features of the Transvaal controversy. But none of them can fairly be described as menaces which would seriously prejudice the chances of peace.

The controversy one of substance not of form.

There is no reason to think that either in the despatches or in the speeches there were any details of mere tone and language which seriously offended or alarmed the Boers. Whilst extremely sensitive and suspicious as to the smallest movement of troops or the real intentions of a despatch, they never really resented the use of plain language. Their contentions were in regard to facts. It was not the word suzerainty that they resented, but the relationship which, whether rightly expressed in a single word or not, was, in the view of the British Government, created by the successive Conventions with the Transvaal. President Kruger, who compared his opponents to baboons and tortoises and did not hesitate on occasion to address them as "thieves and murderers," was not likely to object to picturesque phrases about sponges and sand-glasses. Throughout the negotiations the controversy was one of substance and not of form. The Imperial Government, responding to the petition of justly discontented British subjects in the Transvaal, and anxious to bring about some settlement that would allay the steady growth of racial antagonism and political discontent in South Africa, pressed for a moderate and reasonable measure of reform. President Kruger, whose whole power and influence was based on the existence of racial feud and aggressive nationalist ambition, was determined at all hazards to exclude from an effective voice in the counsels

of his State the men whose industry had made that State, but who did not share the narrow aspirations which guided its policy. Sooner than admit them he was prepared to precipitate, somewhat before its time, the war towards which his policy was inevitably steering. When all is said and done, these are the essential facts that stand out, and it is upon these that history will give its verdict.

LEADING EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY *

1486. Discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomew Diaz.
1591. English ships visit Table Bay for the first time.
1652. Table Bay occupied by the Dutch East India Company.
1655. The first vineyard planted.
1658. Introduction of slaves.
1659. Hostilities with the Hottentots.
1679. Foundation of Stellenbosch.
1685. Copper discovered in Namaqualand.
1688. Arrival of Huguenot settlers.
1779. Operations against the Kaffirs.
1781. French troops landed to defend the Cape against the British.
1789. Further troubles with the Kaffirs.
1792. A Moravian mission station established.
1795. Surrender of Cape Colony to the British.
1799. The London Missionary Society begins work among the natives.
Kaffir and Hottentot depredations.
1803. Cape Colony restored to the Dutch.
1806. Second surrender of Cape Colony to the British.
1812. First Kaffir war.
1815. Formal cession of the Cape to the British.
The Slagter's Nek rebellion.
1818. The second Kaffir war.
1820. Arrival of British settlers. Foundation of Port Elizabeth.
1822. Beginning of the Zulu wars of extermination.
1834. The Slave Emancipation Act.
1834–5. Third Kaffir war.
1836–7. The Great Trek.
1837. Boers defeat the Matabele, who retreat north of the Limpopo.
1838. Liberation of all slaves.
Massacre at Weenen (February 6).

* Many of these are not referred to in the narrative of the history as not bearing directly upon the relations between the Imperial Government and the Republics.

1838. Dingaan's Day (December 16).
1842. Military occupation of Natal by the British.
1843. Creation of Griqua and Basuto Protected Native States.
1844. Establishment of the Pondo Treaty State.
1846. Fourth Kaffir war.
1847. Constitution of the province of British Kaffraria.
1848. British sovereignty declared over the territory between the Orange and Vaal rivers (February 3). Boomplaatz (August 29).
1850. The fifth Kaffir war.
1851. Troubles with the Basutos.
1852. The Sand River Convention (January 17).
1854. The Bloemfontein Convention (January 30). Creation of a Parliament in Cape Colony.
1857. The Pretorius-Kruger Raid.
1864. End of civil wars in the Transvaal. Pretorius President.
1865. British Kaffraria annexed to Cape Colony.
1868. Basutoland declared British territory.
1869. Discovery of diamonds in South Africa.
1871. Creation of the province of Griqualand West.
1872. Mr. T. F. Burgers elected President of the Transvaal.
Responsible government granted to Cape Colony.
1875. Award by Marshal MacMahon in regard to Delagoa Bay (July 24).
1876. The Sikukuni war.
Sir T. Shepstone's mission to Pretoria.
Sir Bartle Frere appointed Governor and High Commissioner.
1877. Annexation of the Transvaal (April 12).
Kruger's first visit to England.
Sixth Kaffir war.
1878. Kruger visits England a second time.
Outbreak of Zulu war.
1879. Recall of Sir T. Shepstone.
Appointment of Colonel Lanyon.
Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift (January 22).
Ulundi (July 4).
1880. Revolt in Basutoland.
Sir G. Colley appointed Governor of Natal and High Commissioner of South-East Africa.
Recall of Sir Bartle Frere (August 1).
Proclamation of the Transvaal Republic (December 15).
Bronkhorst Spruit (December 20).
1881. Laing's Nek (January 28). Ingogo (February 8).
Majuba (February 27).
The Pretoria Convention (August 3).
1882. First restriction of the franchise in the Transvaal.
Afrikander Bond agitation.
1883. German colony founded in Damaraland.

1883. Kruger elected President (May 9).
1884. The London Convention (February 27).
Boer raids into Bechuanaland.
Basutoland separated from Cape Colony.
Establishment of the New Republic in Zululand.
German annexation of Damaraland and Namaqualand.
1885. Sir C. Warren's expedition.
Constitution of the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland.
1886. Discovery of the Witwatersrand goldfields.
British recognition of the New Republic.
1887. Annexation of Zululand by Great Britain.
Formation of the Netherlands Railway Company.
First dynamite concession.
1888. British treaty with Lobengula. Kruger re-elected President.
1889. Customs Union between Cape Colony and the Orange Free State.
The Potchefstroom Treaty (March 13).
Formation of the British South Africa Company.
Confiscation by Portugal of the Delagoa Bay Railway.
1890. The Swaziland Convention.
Beginning of Uitlander disfranchisement laws.
1891. The Banyailand trek.
1892. Formation of the Transvaal National Union.
1893. Kruger's third Presidency.
Responsible government introduced in Natal (June 26).
The Matabele war.
1894. Pondoland annexed to Cape Colony.
Commandeering crisis in the Transvaal.
1895. Great franchise petition.
British Bechuanaland annexed to Cape Colony.
The Brown case.
Kruger closes the Drifts.
The Jameson Raid (December 29).
1896. Raiders surrender at Doornkop (January 2).
The German Emperor's telegram (January 3).
Trial of the Johannesburg Reformers (April 28).
Mr. Conyngham Greene appointed British Agent (August).
Transvaal Aliens Expulsion and Immigration Acts.
1897. Sir A. Milner appointed High Commissioner (February 15).
Transvaal and Free State Closer Union Treaty.
Repeal of the Aliens Immigration Law.
The Transvaal Industrial Commission.
1898. Kruger's fourth Presidency.
Dismissal of Chief Justice Kotzé (February 16).
Correspondence on the suzerainty question.
Dr. Leyds goes to Europe as Minister of the Transvaal.
Afrikander Ministry in Cape Colony.

1898. Anglo-German Delagoa Bay agreement.
Natal enters the Customs Union.
Sir W. Butler's temporary High Commissionership (December–February, 1899).
The Edgar case (December 18).
Mr. Schreiner's Navy Vote.

1899. Arrest of Messrs. Webb and Dodd.
Protest by Mr. Chamberlain against the dynamite monopoly (January 13).
The Amphitheatre meeting (January 14).
Transvaal proposals to the mining representatives (February 27).
Uitlander petition (March 24).
Mr. Reitz's suzerainty despatch (May 9).
Bogus conspiracy at Johannesburg (May 16).
The Bloemfontein Conference (May 31–June 5).
Successive Transvaal franchise schemes (June 13–July 18).
Queensland offers volunteers (July 11).
Mr. Chamberlain's joint inquiry despatch (July 27).
South African Debate in House of Commons (July 28).
The Smuts-Greene negotiations (August 12–21).
Recall of Sir W. Butler (August 16).
The Transvaal Revoke (August 21–September 2).
Cabinet Council. Indian contingent ordered (September 8).
Last British despatch (September 22).
Boer ultimatum decided on. Boer mobilization (September 27).
Offers of colonial contingents accepted (October 3).
Mobilization of a field force for South Africa.
Boer ultimatum presented (October 9).
Beginning of the South African War (October 11).

BRITISH GOVERNORS OF THE CAPE.

(*From* 1877 *also High Commissioners for South Africa.*)

1806. Sir David Baird.
Lord Caledon.
1811. Sir John Cradock.
1813. Lord Charles Somerset.
1825. Major-General R. Bourke.
1828. Sir G. Lowry Cole.
1833. Sir Benjamin D'Urban.
1838. Sir George Napier.
1843. Sir Peregrine Maitland.
1846. Sir Henry Pottinger.
1847. Sir Harry G. W. Smith.
1852. Major-General G. Cathcart.
1854. Sir George Grey.
1861. Sir Philip Wodehouse.
1870. Sir Henry Barkly.
1877. Sir Bartle Frere.
1880. Sir Hercules Robinson.
1889. Sir Henry Loch.
1895. Sir Hercules Robinson (Lord Rosmead).
1897. Sir Alfred Milner.

PRIME MINISTERS OF CAPE COLONY.

1872. Mr. J. C. Molteno.
1878. Mr. J. Gordon Sprigg.
1881. Mr. T. C. Scanlen.
1884. Mr. T. Upington.
1886. Sir J. Gordon Sprigg.
1890. Mr. C. J. Rhodes.
1896. Sir J. Gordon Sprigg.
1898. Mr. W. P. Schreiner.
1900. Sir J. Gordon Sprigg.

CHIEF PROVISIONS OF THE PRETORIA CONVENTION.

CONVENTION FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE TRANSVAAL TERRITORY.

August, 1881.

Preamble.

Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Settlement of the Transvaal territory, duly appointed as such by a commission passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet, bearing date the 5th day of April, 1881, do hereby undertake and guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty that, from and after the 8th day of August, 1881, complete self-government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, will be accorded to the inhabitants of the Transvaal territory, upon the following terms and conditions, and subject to the following reservations and limitations:

Article I.

The said territory, to be hereinafter called the Transvaal State, will embrace the land lying between the following boundaries, to wit: [Here follow three pages in print defining boundaries.]

Article II.

Her Majesty reserves to herself, her heirs and successors, (*a*) the right from time to time to appoint a British Resident in and for the said State, with such duties and functions as are hereinafter defined; (*b*) the right to move troops through the said State in time of war, or in case of the apprehension of immediate war between the Suzerain Power and any Foreign State or Native tribe in South Africa; and (*c*) the control of the external relations of the said State, including the conclusion of treaties and the conduct of diplomatic intercourse with Foreign Powers, such intercourse to be carried on through Her Majesty's diplomatic and consular officers abroad.

ARTICLE III.

Until altered by the Volksraad, or other competent authority, all laws, whether passed before or after the annexation of the Transvaal territory to Her Majesty's dominions, shall, except in so far as they are inconsistent with or repugnant to the provisions of this Convention, be and remain in force in the said State in so far as they shall be applicable thereto, provided that no future enactment especially affecting the interest of natives shall have any force or effect in the said State, without the consent of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, first had and obtained and signified to the Government of the said State through the British Resident, provided further that in no case will the repeal or amendment of any laws enacted since the annexation have a retrospective effect, so as to invalidate any acts done or liabilities incurred by virtue of such laws.

ARTICLE X.

The Transvaal State will be liable for the balance of the debts for which the South African Republic was liable at the date of annexation, to wit, the sum of £48,000 in respect of the Cape Commercial Bank Loan, and £85,667 in respect of the Railway Loan, together with the amount due on 8th August, 1881, on account of the Orphan Chamber Debt, which now stands at £22,200, which debts will be a first charge upon the revenues of the State. The Transvaal State will, moreover, be liable for the lawful expenditure lawfully incurred for the necessary expenses of the Province since the annexation, to wit, the sum of £265,000, which debt, together with such debts as may be incurred by virtue of the 9th Article, will be a second charge upon the revenues of the State.

ARTICLE XII.

All persons holding property in the said State on the 8th day of August, 1881, will continue after the said date to enjoy the rights of property which they have enjoyed since the annexation. No person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the recent hostilities shall suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty, or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities, and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights, and protection for their persons and property.

ARTICLE XVI.

The provisions of the Fourth Article of the Sand River Convention are hereby reaffirmed, and no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery will be tolerated by the Government of the said State.

ARTICLE XVIII.

The following will be the duties and functions of the British Resident:

Sub-section 1.—He will perform functions and duties analogous to those discharged by a Chargé d'Affaires and Consul-General.

Sub-section 2.—In regard to natives within the Transvaal State, he will (*a*) report to the High Commissioner, as representative of the Suzerain, as to the working and observance of the provisions of this Convention; (*b*) report to the Transvaal authorities any cases of ill-treatment of natives or attempts to incite natives to rebellion that may come to his knowledge; (*c*) use his influence with the natives in favour of law and order; and (*d*) generally perform such other duties as are by this Convention entrusted to him, and take such steps for the protection of the person and property of natives as are consistent with the laws of the land.

Sub-section 3.—In regard to natives not residing in the Transvaal, (*a*) he will report to the High Commissioner and the Transvaal Government any encroachments reported to him as having been made by Transvaal residents upon the land of such natives, and in case of disagreement between the Transvaal Government and the British Resident as to whether an encroachment had been made, the decision of the Suzerain will be final; (*b*) the British Resident will be the medium of communication with native chiefs outside the Transvaal, and, subject to the approval of the High Commissioner, as representing the Suzerain, he will control the conclusion of treaties with them; and (*c*) he will arbitrate upon every dispute between Transvaal residents and natives outside the Transvaal (as to acts committed beyond the boundaries of the Transvaal) which may be referred to him by the parties interested.

Sub-section 4.—In regard to communications with foreign Powers, the Transvaal Government will correspond with Her Majesty's Government through the British Resident and the High Commissioner.

ARTICLE XXIV.

The independence of the Swazies within the boundary line of Swaziland, as indicated in the First Article of this Convention, will be fully recognised.

ARTICLE XXV.

No other or higher duties will be imposed on the importation into the Transvaal State of any article the produce or manufacture of the dominions and possessions of Her Majesty, from whatever place arriving, than are or may be payable on the like article the produce or manufacture of any other country, nor will any prohibition be maintained or imposed on the importation of any article the produce or

manufacture of the dominions and possessions of Her Majesty, which shall not equally extend to the importation of the like articles being the produce or manufacture of any other country.

ARTICLE XXVI.

All persons other than natives conforming themselves to the laws of the Transvaal State (*a*) will have full liberty with their families to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the Transvaal State; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactures, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon Transvaal citizens.

ARTICLE XXVIII.

All persons other than natives who established their domicile in the Transvaal between the 12th day of April, 1877, and the date when this Convention comes into effect, and who shall within twelve months after such last-mentioned date have their names registered by the British Resident, shall be exempt from all compulsory military service whatever. The Resident shall notify such registration to the Government of the Transvaal State.

CHIEF PROVISIONS OF THE LONDON CONVENTION.

A CONVENTION BETWEEN HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

February, 1884.

Whereas the Government of the Transvaal State, through its Delegates, consisting of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, President of the said State, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, Superintendent of Education, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, a member of the Volksraad, have represented that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881, and ratified by the Volksraad of the said State on the 25th October, 1881, contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved, and that the south-western

boundaries fixed by the said Convention should be amended, with a view to promote the peace and good order of the said State, and of the countries adjacent thereto; and whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration: Now, therefore, Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared, that the following articles of a new Convention, signed on behalf of Her Majesty by Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, the Right Honourable Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and on behalf of the Transvaal State (which shall hereinafter be called the South African Republic) by the above-named Delegates, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, shall, when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, be substituted for the articles embodied in the Convention of 3rd August, 1881; which latter, pending such ratification, shall continue in full force and effect.

Article III.

If a British officer is appointed to reside at Pretoria or elsewhere within the South African Republic to discharge functions analogous to those of a Consular officer, he will receive the protection and assistance of the Republic.

Article IV.

The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

Such approval shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty's Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such treaty (which shall be delivered to them immediately upon its completion), have notified that the conclusion of such treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa.

Article V.

The South African Republic will be liable for any balance which may still remain due of the debts for which it was liable at the date of Annexation—to wit, the Cape Commercial Bank Loan, the Railway Loan, and the Orphan Chamber Debt—which debts will be a first charge upon the revenues of the Republic. The South African Republic will, moreover, be liable to Her Majesty's Government for £250,000, which will be a second charge upon the revenues of the Republic.

Article VIII.

The South African Republic renews the declaration made in the Sand River Convention, and in the Convention of Pretoria, that no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery will be tolerated by the Government of the said Republic.

Article IX.

There will continue to be complete freedom of religion and protection from molestation for all denominations, provided the same be not inconsistent with morality and good order; and no disability shall attach to any person in regard to rights of property by reason of the religious opinions which he holds.

Article XII.

The independence of the Swazies, within the boundary line of Swaziland, as indicated in the First Article of this Convention, will be fully recognised.

Article XIII.

Except in pursuance of any treaty or engagement made as provided in Article 4 of this Convention, no other or higher duties shall be imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any part of Her Majesty's dominions than are or may be imposed on the like article coming from any other place or country; nor will any prohibition be maintained or imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any part of Her Majesty's dominions which shall not equally extend to the like article coming from any other place or country. And in like manner the same treatment shall be given to any article coming to Great Britain from the South African Republic as to the like article coming from any other place or country.

These provisions do not preclude the consideration of special arrangements as to import duties and commercial relations between the South African Republic and any of Her Majesty's colonies or possessions.

Article XIV.

All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (*a*) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject, in respect of their

persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.

ARTICLE XIX.

The Government of the South African Republic will engage faithfully to fulfil the assurances given, in accordance with the laws of the South African Republic, to the natives at the Pretoria Pitso by the Royal Commission in the presence of the Triumvirate and with their entire assent, (1) as to the freedom of the natives to buy or otherwise acquire land under certain conditions, (2) as to the appointment of a commission to mark out native locations, (3) as to the access of the natives to the courts of law, and (4) as to their being allowed to move freely within the country, or to leave it for any legal purpose, under a pass system.

ARTICLE XX.

This Convention will be ratified by a Volksraad of the South African Republic within the period of six months after its execution, and in default of such ratification this Convention shall be null and void.

Signed in duplicate in London this 27th day of February, 1884.

HERCULES ROBINSON.
S. J. P. KRUGER.
S. J. DU TOIT.
N. J. SMIT.

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